

SAINT PAULS.

DECEMBER, 1869.

THE THREE BROTHERS.

CHAPTER XXII.

PLAY.

It must be admitted that the counsel thus bestowed upon Laurie in respect to his work had rather a discouraging than a stimulating effect upon him. It disgusted him, no doubt, with Edith and his big canvas, but it did not fill him, as it was intended to do, with enthusiasm for Clipstone Street, and his other opportunities of legitimate work. He made it an excuse for doing nothing, which was unfortunate, after so much trouble had been taken about him. Perhaps, on the whole, it would have been better to have let him have his way. The padrona herself thought so, though she had not been able to refrain from interfering when she had the opportunity. The Square, and the adjacent regions, had pronounced almost unanimously that the sketch was a very clever sketch; but, notwithstanding, deprecated with one voice the big canvas, and the ambitious work. "I did it, and you see I have not made much of it," said Suffolk. "If I thought I could make as much of it as you have done, I should go in for it to-morrow," cried Laurie, with an enthusiasm for which the painter's wife could have hugged him. "But, dear Mr. Renton, if you would but advise him to take simpler subjects!" Mrs. Suffolk said, with her pathetic voice. Suffolk was a man of genius, as even old Welby admitted, and slowly, by degrees, the profession itself was beginning to be awake to his merits; but as for the British public, it knew nothing of the painter, except that up to this moment he had been hung down on the floor, or up at the roof, in the Academy's exhibition, and sneered at in the "Sword." This was what came of high art.

Mr. Welby paid Laurie a visit in his rooms, to enforce the lesson upon him. "If we had room and space for that sort of thing, it would be all very well, sir," said the R.A., "but in a private collection what can you do with it? The best thing Suffolk could hope

for would be to have his picture hung in some Manchester man's dining-room;—best patrons we have nowadays. But it would fill up the whole wall, and naturally the Manchester man would rather have two or three Maclises, and a Mulready, and a Webster, and even a Welby, my dear fellow,—not to speak of Millais, and the young ones. There's how it is. A dozen pictures are better than one in our patrons' eyes,—more use, and more variety, and by far more valuable if anything should happen to the mills. Though it's a work of genius, Renton,—I don't deny it's a work of genius,—whereas this——"

"Is nothing but a beginner's attempt, I know," said poor Laurie. "That is all settled and understood. Let us talk of something else."

Mr. Welby, without heeding the young man, got up, and gazed upon the white canvas, which still stood on the easel like a ghost, with the white outlines growing fainter. Laurie had not had the heart to touch it since that evening in the Square. "I don't understand how you young men can be so rash," he said; "for my part, I think there is no picture that ever was painted equal to the sublimity of that blank canvas. Why, sir, it might be anything! Buonarotti or Leonardo never equalled what it might be. It is a thing that strikes me with awe; I feel like a wretch when I put the first daub of vulgar colour on it. Colour brings it down to reality,—to our feeble efforts after expression,—but in itself it is the inexpressible. I don't mind your chalk so much. It's a desecration, but not sacrilege,—a white shadow on the white blank,—and it might turn out anything, sir! Whereas, if you put another touch on it, you would bring it down to your own level. The wonder to me always is how a man who is a true painter ever paints a line!"

"It is well for the world that you have not always been of that opinion," said Laurie, forcing out a little compliment in spite of himself.

"But I have always been of that opinion," said Mr. Welby. "Unfortunately, man is a complex being, my dear fellow, and whatever your convictions and higher sentiments may be, the other part of you will force itself into expression. But the thing is to keep it down as long as possible, and subdue and train it like any other slave. That is always my advice to you young men. Never draw two lines when you can do with one. Don't spoil an inch more of that lovely white canvas than your idea will fill. Keep within your idea, my dear Laurie. You should no more tell it all out than a woman should tell out how fond she is of you. Art is coy, and loves a secret," said the old man, warming into a kind of enthusiasm.

These were the kind of addresses which were made to Laurie in this his first attempt to stumble out of his pleasant amateur ways into professional work and its habits. He could not but ask himself, with a tragi-comic wonder, whether it was anxiety for his good alone which wound up his friends into eloquence, or whether there had

ever been a novice so overwhelmed by good advice before. He had done what he liked in the old days, when what he liked was of little consequence; but it was clear that he was not to be permitted to do what he liked now. He was affronted, disgusted, amused, and discouraged, all in a breath. Work in cold blood for work's sake, to lead to no immediate end, was something of which Laurie was incapable. It seemed to him that the way to become a painter was by painting pictures, and he did not give the weight they deserved to his friends' counsels when they adjured him to work at smaller matters, and to postpone the great. "I shall never satisfy them," he said to himself; and accordingly the spur being thus removed, his natural habit of mind returned upon him. He had no tendency to extravagance, being simple in all his tastes, and it seemed to him that he could get on very well on his two hundred a year. "I shall never marry," Laurie said to himself, with a sigh, "nor think of marrying. That sort of thing is all over; and there is enough to keep me alive, I suppose. And why should I go worrying everybody about pictures which I don't suppose I am fit to paint? But I may be of use to my friends," he added in his self-communion. So he took to play instead of work, which he found to be more congenial to his ancient habits, and he fell back into it as naturally as possible. It would have been better for him, so far as his profession was concerned, had they let him have his own way.

But if he could not be a great painter himself, it was possible enough that he might be of use to those who were so. Though he had been momentarily absorbed by his abortive project, and momentarily thrown off his balance by all the opposition it met, yet he had not forgotten his promise to Mrs. Suffolk. If there was anything he could do to open the eyes of the British public, and show it what a blunder it was making, that would always be so much rescued from the blank of existence. Laurie's Edith, even had she come to the first development which he once hoped for her, could never be,—or at least it was not probable that she would ever be,—equal to that scene in the Forum, which hung neglected on the wall of Suffolk's studio. To bring the one into the light of day was perhaps a better work than to paint the other. It was the first thought that roused Laurie out of his own mortification. He bore no malice. He was too sweet-hearted, too easy and forgiving, for that. Indeed, on the contrary, he was very grateful to one at least of his hardest critics. The padrona had uncovered her heart to him by way of pointing her objection. He had seen into her mind and spirit as perhaps no one else had ever done. He was sorry for the pain it must have given her to speak to him,—even more sorry than for himself; but Laurie could not, though Mrs. Severn would have wondered, speak what people call "a good word" on her behalf when he got Slasher in his power. The words would have choked

him. Ask any man in ordinary Art-jargon and common print to applaud the woman to whom his own heart began to give a kind of wordless, half-unconscious worship! Ask for praise, public praise, for his padrona! He would as soon have thought of leading her upon the stage to have garlands thrown at her feet like a prima donna. Here was a disability of woman which nobody had ever thought of before. It did not matter much, from Laurie's point of view, whether they blamed her or praised her. To name her at all was a presumption unpardonable, the mere thought of which made his cheek burn. And yet it would have done Mrs. Severn a great deal of good had the "Sword" taken an enthusiasm for her. And Laurie had no objection to her work. He knew that he could not have done it for her had he tried his hardest. Her independence, and her labours, and her artist life, were all part of herself. He could not realise her otherwise. But to have her talked of in the papers! Laurie's private feeling was, that instead of influencing Slasher in her favour, he would like to knock down the fellow who should dare to have the presumption to think that she could be the better for his praise!

But Suffolk was a totally different matter. And Laurie, having turned his back upon the studio, and turned himself loose, so to speak, upon the world again, set to work at the club and elsewhere, to cultivate Slasher with devotion. Slasher was understood to be the special art-critic of the "Sword;" and he had qualified himself for such a post, as most men do, by an unsuccessful beginning as a painter, which had, however, happened so long ago that some people had forgotten, and some even were not aware of the fact. Though he was not ill-natured, it must be admitted that Laurie commended himself to the critic by the want of success which the young fellow did not attempt to disguise. "My friends are a great deal too good to me," Laurie said, with comic simpleness; "they have all fallen upon my picture so, that I have given it up. What is the use of trying to paint with every man's opinion against you? I have not stuff enough in me for that!"

"Poor Laurie!" Slasher said, with a laugh which was not unkind. "If you had persevered, probably I, too, should have been compelled, in the interests of art, to let loose my opinion. So it is as well for me you stopped in time."

"But I want you to let loose your opinion, and do a service to the nation," said Laurie. "I want you to come to my place and meet a friend of mine,—the cleverest fellow I know. All he wants is, that you should speak a good word for him in the 'Sword.'"

"Ah!" said the critic, with a groan of disgust; "I am tired of speaking good words. I don't mind walking into anybody to do you a favour, my dear fellow. There's always some justice in anything you like to say against a picture,—or a man either. But if you knew the sickening stuff one has to pour forth for one's own friends, or

one's editor's friends ! I am never asked to give a good notice in the 'Sword' but I feel that it's for an ass. Instinct, Laurie ! I dare-say your friend is everything that's delightful, but if his pictures were worth twopence you would never come to me for a good word."

"I should not ask you to praise him, certainly, if I did not think he deserved it," said Laurie, with a little offence.

"Ah ! if you were as well used to that sort of thing as I am," said Slasher, with a sigh. "I don't mind cutting 'em all up in little pieces to please the public. A slashing article is the easiest writing going. You have only to seize upon a man's weak point,—and every man has a weak point,—and go at it without fear or favour; but when Crowther comes and lays his hand on my shoulder in his confounded condescending way, 'My dear fellow,' he says, 'here's a poor devil who is always pestering me. He is a cousin of my wife's;' or, 'he's a friend of my brother-in-law's;' or, 'he was at school with my boy,' as the case may be. 'I suppose his picture's as weak as water; but, hang it ! say a good word for him. It may do him good, and it can't do us any harm.' That's what I've got to do, till it makes me sick, I tell you. I'll pitch into your aversions, my dear Laurie, and welcome; but don't ask me to say good words for your friends."

"But my friend is a man of genius," said Laurie. "I don't want you to speak up for him because he is my friend; but because his pictures are as fine as anything you ever saw."

Slasher shook his head mournfully. "I don't know anything about his pictures," he said; "but that's how criticism gets done nowadays. A man speaks well of his friend, and ill of the fellows he don't like. And, as for justice, you know, and appreciation of merit, and so forth, —except, perhaps, once in a way, in the case of a new name, that nobody knows,—you might as well look for snow in July. And it's just the same in literature. I said to Crowther the other day: 'That's a nice book, I suppose, as you praised it so.' 'No,' he says, 'it's not a very nice book; but the man that wrote it is a nice fellow, which comes to the same thing.' No, Laurie, my boy, I'm sick of praising people that don't deserve it. That's why I go in for cynicism and abuse, and all that. It may be hard upon a poor fellow now and then, but at all events, it isn't d——d lies."

"I don't want you to tell lies," said Laurie, half-affronted, half-laughing. "Come with me on Thursday to the Hydrographic. It's Suffolk's night for exhibition, and you shall see him, and see his work—"

"Suffolk ! " said Slasher. "That fellow ! By Jove ! I like your modesty, Laurie Renton, to come here calmly and ask me to praise a man's pictures whom I have cut up a score of times at least."

"But I don't suppose you ever saw them," said Laurie, standing his ground.

"I've seen them as well as anybody could see them," said Slasher.

"I remember there was one in the North Room down on the floor one year, and one over the doorway. My dear fellow, I've seen the kind of thing,—that's enough. Heroic figures, with big bones, and queer garments—red hair, that never was combed in its life—and big blue saucer eyes, glaring out of the canvas. I know ;—there are two or three fellows that do that sort of thing. But it will never take, you may be sure. The British public likes respectable young women with their clothes put properly on them; in nice velvet and satin, that they can guess at how much it cost a yard."

"The British public ought to be ashamed of itself," said Laurie ; "but you may come with me on Thursday all the same."

"I don't mind if I do for once," said the critic. And so the matter was settled. Laurie was a very busy man until Thursday came. He was as busy as he had been when his mind was full of Edith, but, on the whole, in a more agreeable way. After all, to shut yourself up all day long in a first floor in Charlotte Street, with a terrible litter about you,—for when there is nobody to keep you neat but a maid-of-all-work, and you have no time for "tidying" yourself, litter is the inevitable consequence,—your windows shut up, and the light coming in over your head, as in a prison, is not a seductive occupation. Now that Edith was pushed aside out of the way and the windows were open, the room was more bearable. And why a man should make himself wretched by pursuing high art in direct opposition to all his friends ? But Laurie betook himself, without entering into any explanations, to Suffolk's house, and devoted himself to the task of collecting together his friend's loose drawings. They had grown intimate by their frequent meetings in the Square. And Suffolk, who was in danger, as his wife feared, of getting "soured," and who was busy, and did not care to exhibit himself at the Hydrographic, gave in to Laurie with a half-sullen acquiescence. "What's the good ?" he said. "But, Reginald, dear, it may be a great deal of good," his wife said, turning wistful eyes upon him. And Laurie went and came, bringing his spick-and-span new portfolios to receive the drawings, which were huddled up in all sorts of dusty, battered, travel-worn receptacles. In such matters amateurs are safe to have the advantage over the brethren in the profession. He mounted, and trimmed, and arranged all day long, with his mouth full of dust, and his heart full of hope; and confided his anticipations to the padrona in the evening, having established a right to the entrée at that moment of moments which she spent with her children over the fire. It came to look natural that Laurie should take his place on the hearth, in the firelight, along with little Frank and Harry. "A curious taste," the padrona said, and laughed; but not without a little wonder rising in her mind as to how this fancy was to be accounted for. "The boy likes to feel as if he were one of the family, I suppose," she said to Miss Hadley, who looked on sometimes, with her knitting, and did not approve ;—"for he is only a boy."

"He is boy enough to be fond of women a dozen of years older than himself," said Miss Hadley, with a significant nod. To which Mrs. Severn, with her eyes fixed on the fire, made no immediate reply.

"After all, it is quite natural," the padrona continued, after a pause; "he is separated from his own family by this strange business; —and such an affectionate, soft-hearted fellow!"

"Well, I think it is chiefly affectionateness," Miss Hadley admitted; and she added after a moment: "It cannot be for Alice, as I thought."

"The child!" cried Mrs. Severn, in alarm. "She is but a child. Don't talk as if it were possible any one should dream of stealing her from me. What should we do without Alice?" cried the mother, with a sudden pang. "Jane, I hope you will not do anything to put such ideas in any one's mind."

"Such ideas come of themselves," said Miss Hadley. "She will be sixteen in summer. She is of more use than many a woman of six-and-twenty. She must marry some time or other. Why, what else could you look for when you refused to bring her up to do anything? A girl who has no fortune in this world must either marry, or work, or starve; and I don't know," said the strong-minded woman, with energy, "which is the worst."

"Hush," said the padrona, with a smile, "infidel! And here is the child going to her music. Alice, come and look me in the face."

"Have I been naughty, mamma?" said Alice, bending over her mother. For a moment the two looked into each other's eyes, with the perfect love, and trust, and understanding which belongs to that dearest of relationships. If it gave a pang to the heart of the woman looking on, who had no child, I cannot tell. The mother lifted her face, still warm with all the vigour, and softness, and beauty of life, and kissed the lovely, soft cheek, in its perfection of youth. "It would be no wonder if any one loved her," she said softly, when the child had disappeared into the soft darkness in the next room, her heart wrung with a premonitory pang of tender anguish. That was the night on which Laurie brought his brother Frank,—splendid young Guardsman, who had run up to town to endeavour to arrange the exchange he wanted into a regiment going to India,—to introduce him to his friends in the Square.

But on the Thursday he rushed in breathless for five minutes only in the gloaming, to keep the padrona au courant of affairs. "We have placed the picture, and it shows splendidly!" he cried. "The only thing I fear is that Suffolk will be sulky, and not show as well as the picture. Could not you send for him before he goes, and put him in a good humour? If he were out of temper it might spoil all."

"I will send for them," said the padrona, "and keep his wife with me till you come back. It is very good of you to take all this trouble. I wish you had a picture to show splendidly too."

"How inconsistent some people are," said Laurie. "After making

an end of my poor picture ! No, padrona, that is all over. Let us now be of some use to our friends."

"But it is not all over," said Mrs. Severn. And then she paused, seeing, perhaps, some signs of impatience in him. "Heaps of people can paint pictures," she said; "but it is not everybody who can serve their friends,—like this."

"If it but succeed it will be something gained," said Laurie, with a sigh of anxiety; "and you will think me, after all, not useless in the world?" he went on, holding out his hand. Miss Hadley was looking on, with very sharp eyes; and she saw that the young man stood holding the padrona's hand much longer than was necessary for the formality of leave-taking. "Slasher is to dine with me at the club," he continued. "He will be in good-humour at least. And you will think of us, and wish us good speed?"

"Surely," the padrona said, withdrawing her hand; and Miss Hadley sat glancing out of the darkness with her keen eyes; knitting for ever, and looking on. When the young man was gone a certain embarrassment stole over Mrs. Severn,—she could not tell why. "He is as eager and excited as if his own fate were to be decided to-night," she said. "What a good fellow he is!" Miss Hadley made no reply. No sound but that of the knitting-needles clicking against each other with a certain fierceness came out of the twilight in the corner. In this silence there was a certain disapproval, which made the padrona uncomfortable in spite of herself. "I am afraid you have changed your opinion of poor Laurie," she said, after a pause. "I thought you used to like him?" The children had not yet come down from their game of romps in the nursery up-stairs, and the two were alone.

"I like him very well," said Miss Hadley. "I like him so well that I can't bear to see him making a fool of himself."

"How is he making a fool of himself?" said Mrs. Severn quickly.

"Or to see other people making a fool of him," said Miss Hadley. "There, I have said my say! I don't know if it be his fault or yours; but the young fellow is losing his head, my dear, and you must see it as well as I do."

"I see nothing of the kind," said the padrona, with dignity. "I am surely old enough to be safe from such nonsense; and you are too old to talk like a school-girl. You are as jealous as a man," she added, after a pause, relapsing into easier tones. "Would you like me to forbid the poor boy the house?"

"It might be best," said Miss Hadley, stiffly;—"certainly for him. I don't know about you."

"What folly!" cried the padrona, with momentary anger; but the children rushed in at the moment, sweeping away all other thoughts. Mrs. Severn, however, was more silent than usual as she sat in the firelight with Edie's soft arms clasped round her neck. She told but

one story all the evening, and that an old one. Her mind was pre-occupied. The governess sitting in the corner grew bitter as she gazed at her. "A woman with every blessing of life,—a woman with all those children," Miss Hadley said to herself; "yet a young man's silly love is enough to draw her mind away from them,—at her age! What fools we are!" Thus another little drama sprang into life in a corner, with actors, and accessories, and spectators, all complete. There was Alice in the great dim drawing-room, as usual, playing softly, till the very air seemed to dream and murmur with the wistfulness of her music. "This romance should have come to the child," Miss Hadley mused, with anger; "with the child it would have been natural. With the mother—" She could not trust herself to realise what she thought about the mother. She had held so different an opinion of her at all former times; the padrona had shown herself so entirely unmoved by such vanities! And now, good heavens, at her age! Such were Miss Hadley's thoughts as she sat in the twilight, while her friend played with her children. She forgot her sister, who was waiting for her, and all the comforts of the little parlour in Charlotte Street. She would have liked to stay there all night, to keep at her post without intermission, to save the padrona from herself. "She cannot realise what she is doing," Miss Hadley said in her self-communion. And probably Mrs. Severn was aware of her friend's inquisition. She had a little flush on her cheeks when she received the Suffolks, for whom she had sent. She went into all the arrangements of the Hydrographic for that evening with an interest which was a little nervous and overstrained. "I trust some illustrious stranger may be there to be of use to you," she said, with a smile; and took no notice of Miss Hadley, who kept immovably in the background. And when Suffolk, in his best humour and his evening coat, went out to the Hydrographic, where his pictures were being exhibited, the two women, whom he left behind, talked a great deal about Laurie. Poor Laurie! He was very happy, and excited, and in earnest at that moment, believing himself in the fair way of serving his friend. And they both liked him with tenderness, such as women feel for such men. But yet they said "Poor Laurie," even in their commendation and gratitude; and did not well know why.

CHAPTER XXIII.

WHAT CAME OF IT.

WHEN Laurie left the Hydrographic in company with his friend Slasher, he had still a hope of being able to present himself for a few moments in the Square to report how he had sped. But his companion, as it turned out, had no such idea. The Hydrographic held its meetings in the artists' quarter,—in that region which, but for

art, no man of fashion would think of visiting. But being in it, for once in a way, Slasher, who considered himself a man of fashion, had made up his mind to make the best of it. He went with Laurie to his rooms, talking all the way of Suffolk's pictures. That the critic had been shaken by the sight of them, there could be no doubt. He had been moved by the admiration of so many men who knew better than he did. The mere fact that the painter had been invited to make such an exhibition showed that he was becoming known to his own profession, and had been owned by it. There was light and space and leisure to look at the pictures. There was the comfortable sensation,—in Slasher's case,—of a good dinner and pleasant company, and just such an amount of deference to himself as soothed and glorified his self-esteem. He insisted on going with Laurie to finish the evening, letting his tongue loose as they walked along. "There is something in it, I don't deny," he said. "The contrast between that fair group of children and the dark Romans is very well done, and the monk's figure is full of expression. Let us see what you have yourself, Laurie. I, for one, am more interested in that." Welby is such a friend of yours, he might have found a place for something of your own to-night. It is not a bad room for showing a picture,—and all sorts of men go to the Hydrographic. It would be as good a thing as you could do to make Welby exhibit you there next time he has a chance. Yes, I don't deny there's a good deal that's fine about that picture. The light is very well managed. It sets one thinking of Rome, you know, and how the air all smiles and glows about you on a spring morning. It's not a bad picture. Is this where you live? It is not so nice as Kensington Gore."

"No," said Laurie, "it's not so nice; but it's better for work;" and he ushered his companion into his room, where the contents of his portfolios, which he had carried off for Suffolk's sketches, lay about, all mingled with books and studies in oil and a great deal of litter. The big canvas, thrust back into a corner, a pale shadow of what might have been, presided over the confusion. It was not so nice as Kensington Gore; but to Slasher, who liked to feel himself a man of fashion and superior to professional persons, the disorder of the place was not disagreeable. Laurie Renton had once been "a cut above him," and it was not unpleasant to feel that Laurie Renton was now in circumstances to appeal to his patronage. They sat down together over the fire, and lighted their cigars; and what with the smoke and what with the liquids that accompanied it, and the witching hour of night which makes men confidential, and the old associations, Slasher's lips were opened, and he unfolded to Laurie many particulars of his life. "You would not think it, but I began the world in much such a place as this," said the critic. Laurie, of course, knew all about the manner in which his companion had begun the world; for everybody does know all about everybody

else, especially in respect to those circumstances of which everybody else is the least proud. The listener in this case had the embarrassing privilege of contrasting autobiography with history, which is always a curious process. But, notwithstanding this difficulty, Laurie was, as always, a good listener,—not from policy, which seldom deceives any one, but because he preserved that tender politeness of the heart and regard for other people's feelings which make it impossible for a man to contradict or doubt or sneer at his neighbour. "I suppose he thinks it all happened so," Laurie said to himself; and Slasher was grateful to him for the good faith,—a little puzzled certainly, but genuine,—with which he listened. In the breaks of his story he would get up and saunter about the room, turning over Laurie's sketches, and now and then he would interject some remark upon the special subject of the evening.

"Some of those studies of your friend's were fine," he said suddenly. "I hope they'll do him justice next year at the Academy. I'll speak to Sir Peter, if you like; and if the picture he is doing now is as good as the one we saw to-night——"

"One bird in the hand is worth two in the bush," said Laurie, oracularly. "And half a loaf is better than no bread."

"Hang it, what can a fellow do!" cried Slasher. "You are the most pertinacious little beggar I ever came across. Do you think a man can go and eat his own words and stultify himself? Look here, I'll tell you what I'll do. You shall write a notice of the Hydrographic for the 'Sword.' Blow the fellow's trumpet up to the skies, if you like; say there's never been anything like him since Titian. And I'll take it to Crowther. Now I don't see what more a man can do."

"I write the notice for the 'Sword!'" cried Laurie, laughing,—"that is a little too strong. I never put a sentence together in my life."

"As if that had anything to do with it!" said the critic. "Why that's the only good thing I can see in this blessed trade of literature. You can go at it offhand. Put a sentence together! Why I've heard you put twenty. It's nothing but talking, my dear fellow. A practical writer like myself, you know, goes off at the nail, and talks of fifty other subjects before he touches the right one; but I can fancy that the public, by way of a change, might prefer to hear what you wanted to say at once. Of course you can do it; and I'll take it to Crowther. A man cannot make a fairer offer than that."

"It is awfully good of you," said Laurie in a ferment. The proposal went tingling through his veins like wine. It had seemed supremely ridiculous to him when old Welby had suggested that he should take to writing, just as he might have suggested shoemaking or carpentry. But from Slasher, to whom the doors of the "Sword" were open,—and in Suffolk's interest,—the idea changed its aspect. Though there are no labourers of any description who so systematically underrate their trade as do professors of literature, yet it is astonish-

ing how pleased every outsider is who is invited to enter that magic circle. Laurie felt that Slasher in his turn had paid him the most delicate compliment. Though he might have laughed at the "Sword" and the critic, and at newspapers and critics in general, at another moment, no sooner was he asked to strike in, in the mêlée, than the craft and all its adjuncts became splendid to Laurie. What a power it was ! How a word in the "Sword" thrilled through and through those regions where artists congregated, filling some with boundless satisfaction and others with despair ! When he cried out, in modest delight and surprise, "I write a notice for the 'Sword !'" thinking it too grand to be true, he already felt himself ever so much more important, so much cleverer and greater a person than he had been five minutes before. Perhaps, it is true, the smoke and the beverage that accompanied it, and the fact that it was two o'clock in the morning, had something to do with Laurie's pleasure in the proposal, as it had with Mr. Slasher's liberality in making it ;—but still there it was. Laurie Renton, whom everybody had snubbed, down to Forrester,—whom everybody had interfered with and advised and ordered about "for his good,"—might now become, all at once, an authority before whom they would tremble in their turn,—who would dispense justice or favour or vengeance from his high-placed seat. It was when he looked at it from this point of view, and not out of any disinterested love of literature, that he jumped at the idea. Laurie leaned over the fire with his eyes glowing, and revelled in the wonderful thought. He was a little particular about his drawings in most cases, preferring to show them himself, and give what elucidation he saw necessary ; but this time he permitted Slasher to make his own investigations undisturbed. All he had hoped for in his most sanguine moments had been to extract from the critic some grudging word of praise which should rouse public curiosity about Suffolk's picture. But to have the organ in his own hands, to say what he would,—to secure in his own person that art should be spoken of with understanding, commended without fear or favour, condemned with impartiality,—this was something beyond his highest hopes. Such a critic as he himself would be was the thing of all others wanted in the world of art. How often had the painters round him, —how often had he himself,—asked each other if such a thing were possible ? And here was the possibility placed within his reach, —thrust, as it were, into his own hands !

Suffolk had gone home hours before, calling at the Square for his wife. He gave the ladies the very scantiest account of what had happened, but suffered the particulars to be drawn out of him, bit by bit, as he walked home through the dimly-lighted streets. Though he was too proud to make any demonstration of satisfaction before Mrs. Severn, yet his wife read in the eyes whose expression she knew so well, that for once in his life the sense of general approba-

tion had warmed him. "It is all Laurie Renton's doing," she said, in the candour of delight, with a generosity which was not so easy to her husband. Suffolk himself had never made any appeal to Laurie, and did not see it in the same light.

"I don't think Laurie Renton has so much in his power," he said, "though he has taken a great deal of trouble. It was Welby's affair chiefly, of course; and then, after all, a man who has been labouring a dozen years surely does not need to be grateful to anybody if he gets a bit of recognition on his own merits at last."

"Of course it is on your own merits, Reginald," said his wife; but the woman was more grateful than the man. She knew very well that it was not her husband's merits,—which, indeed, had met with but little recognition hitherto,—but that wistful word she had once spoken to Laurie, and his soft heart which had not forgotten it. Suffolk went on, quite unconscious of her thoughts and of her interference, to set down poor Laurie at his just value.

"Renton was there with a friend of his," he continued;—"Slasher, Helen,—that confounded snob who has the impudence to give us all our deserts in the 'Sword,'—as shallow an ape as you ever saw. Laurie's a very good fellow, but he's too general in his friendships. After feeling really obliged to him for his hardiness, to see him arm-in-arm with a conceited ass like that——"

"Did you speak to him?" cried Mrs. Suffolk. "What did he look like? Reginald, of course it is natural that you should be affronted; but if you consider how much influence the 'Sword' has——"

"Oh, I was civil; don't be frightened," said Suffolk. "Deadly civil we both were; and he had something complimentary to say, like the rest. Trust those fellows to see which way the wind's blowing. But what disgusts one is to find Laurie Renton,—a fellow one likes,—hand-in-glove with a snob like that."

"He does not mean it, Reginald, I am sure," said Mrs. Suffolk, driven to her wits' end, and feeling at once disposed to assault her husband for his stupidity, and to cry over poor Laurie, thus cruelly belied.

"Oh, no, he doesn't mean it," said the painter; "it's only that confounded friendliness of his that likes to please everybody. If he had more stamina and less good-nature——" said his critic, severely.

But he never knew how near his wife was to shaking him as she clung to his arm. And Mrs. Suffolk said no more on the subject,—reflecting, first, that when a man takes a ridiculous idea into his head, it is of no use reasoning with him; and, secondly, that Laurie should never know how little gratitude had attended his efforts. That at least she would take into her own hands. If Reginald did not know what his friend had done for him, she at least did. And so did the padrona; and the chances were that their thanks would be more congenial to Laurie than any gruff acknowledgments that might be made from another quarter. Thus the pair walked on, excited by the

faint prospect of better days, through the glimmering, silent streets, when most people were in bed,—the husband making his report in snatches, the wife drawing it forth bit after bit, and piecing the fragments together with an art familiar to women. She knew about as well what had passed as he did by the time they reached their own narrow, dingy door. And after one peep at the children, sleeping up on the fourth floor at the top of the house, Mrs. Suffolk joined her husband in his studio,—where he had gone to smoke his final pipe,—and drew forth further bits from him, and added her words of assent or advice to the deliberations he fell into, standing with a candle in his hand before his half-finished picture. "Please God, you shall have your comforts like the rest, if this comes to anything, my good little wife," he said at last. "Oh, Reginald, it is for you I wish it most," she cried, with tears in her pretty eyes. That gleam of a possible brightening in their lot went to their hearts. Ah, hard, happy, chequered life!—so hard to bear while it is present, so sweet to look back upon when it is past!

But everything was hushed and asleep in the house of the Suffolks when Laurie shook hands with the critic, and stood at his door in the raw, chilly air of the winter morning to see him go. Laurie had not been keeping late hours for some time past, and the excitement had roused him out of all inclination for sleep. He went back to his fire and pushed away the impedimenta from his table, and with his nerves all thrilling, and his brain in a feverish commotion, began to write. Perhaps the soda-water had affected him slightly too,—and the hours of talk, and the novelty of what he had in hand, had undoubtedly affected him. He sat till his fire burned out and his lamp ran down, making his first essay at composition. It seemed to him very easy in his excitement. "If this is all they make so much fuss about!" he said, feeling himself not only capable of the "Sword," but of greater things. The street was beginning to wake to the first sounds of the morning when he threw himself on his bed, chilled and exhausted, yet full of content. Surely, after all, this rapid art, which could be caught up without any study, and the effect of which was immediate, was more to the purpose than the labour of months upon one piece of canvas, which might affect nobody, not even the Hanging Committee. New prospects seemed opening before him also,—prospects more vast and boundless than those which flickered before the eyes of Suffolk and his wife. What if this were now that tide in the affairs of men, which it behoved him to take in its flow! He left his sketches lying about,—paper and chalk and canvas all muddled together,—to be dealt with, in the absence of the portfolios, by the maid-of-all-work; but he took his little writing-desk, with his new production in it, to his bedroom with him, where it might be in safety; and fell asleep when the milkman was going his rounds, feeling himself, as it were, on the edge of an altogether new career.

His composition, however, did not look so hopeful when he got up a few hours later, and read it over in the calm of noon as he eat his breakfast. Miss Hadley over the way had seen that his room was vacant all this time, the windows open, and papers fluttering about in the chilly air. She could not understand why he lost so many hours on such a bright morning, or what had become of him. It was nearly one o'clock before he had done dawdling over his tea, reading and re-reading his criticism. After all, it was not quite so easy. He made a great many emendations, and then took to doubting whether they were emendations; and grew querulous over it, and sadly disturbed in his confidence. Then he folded it up and put it in his pocket, and, snatching up his hat, rushed down-stairs. "He is going to the Square," Miss Hadley said, as she saw him dart round the corner; and she stood for a long time at her window pondering whether Jane could be right about that matter. "She will never be so silly, and he will never be such a fool," said the old lady; and sat down again, with her mind quite excited, to watch when he should come back.

The padrona, for her part, was standing at her easel, troubled with many uncomfortable thoughts. She had looked at herself in the glass that morning longer than usual, and had decided that there were a great many lines in her face which she had not thought of noticing. "I am getting old," the padrona said to herself, and laughed; and then, perhaps, sighed a little. She laughed because she felt as young as ever, and age seemed a joke as it entered her thoughts; and she sighed because—who can follow those subtle shades of fancy? And then she began to think. Laurie Renton was but a boy,—not more than four-and-twenty at the outside, she calculated, reckoning as mothers do. "Harry was beginning to walk when I saw him first, and Harry will be eight in March," said the padrona; "and Laurie was but a schoolboy then, not more than seventeen." Four-and-twenty! He could not be more,—nothing but a boy. And Jane Hadley is an old fool;—that was the easiest solution of the difficulty. Mrs. Severn liked Laurie, she said frankly to herself. It was pleasant to have him running in and out, with all his difficulties and all his wants. He was such a good fellow,—so frank, so natural, so willing to help everybody, so transparent about his own affairs, so—affectionate. Yes, that was the word;—he was affectionate. Half vanished as it were from his own family, he had linked himself on to hers, and she was pleased it should be so. And as for any folly that might enter any one's head! "These old maids!" Mrs. Severn said to herself,—though it was not like her to say it; and thus she tried to dismiss the subject. If he came too often, she might perhaps suggest to him that it would do him a great deal of good to go and study in Italy for the winter. "And I should miss the boy," the padrona said to herself with candour. But in the meantime there

was nothing she could say or do. It was simply ridiculous to think of taking any other step. At her age! and such a boy!

She was still working at the picture which Mr. Welby had commended. It was a commission from her patrons, the Riches of Richmond, and was to be hung in a spot chosen by herself in the bright country-house, full of light, and air, and flowers, and everything sweet, to which they sometimes invited her. Edith's little "wooden sister" was standing to her at the moment, draped in great folds of white. She was working hard at the folds of the dress, and studying with puzzled anxiety the position of the limbs, which Mr. Welby had declared had no joints in them. And she was anything but grateful to Jane Hadley for throwing, just at this moment, an additional embarrassment into her mind. It was while she was thus occupied that Laurie rushed in breathless with his tale of last night's proceedings and his paper to read to her. Any prudential thoughts that might have entered her mind as to the propriety of keeping him at a distance vanished at the sight of him. It was all so perfectly natural. Whom else should he go to, poor fellow, to tell his doings, to communicate all his difficulties and his hopes? Mrs. Severn blushed to think that she could have allowed herself for one moment to be swayed from her natural course by such absurdity. Jane Hadley must have lost her senses. Should the boy go to old Welby and tell him? Should he confide in his landlady? Who was there that he could come to in his difficulties but herself?

"I have brought it to read to you," said Laurie, "if you can take the trouble to listen. I am afraid it is dreadful trash. The truth is, I was a little excited about it last night; and now, this morning—" He was abashed, poor fellow, and explanatory, and very anxious to impress upon her all the excuses there were for its imperfection. Somehow, everything had a different aspect in the morning! He went on, playing with the paper; and then, making a dash at it, began to read. It was not very good, to tell the truth. There was an attempt to be funny in it, which was not very successful, and there was an effort after that airy style which so many young writers attempt unsuccessfully; and then there was a rather grand conclusion, full of big words, which Laurie had risen into just as he heard the first cry of the milkman, and felt that it was necessary to come to an effective close. The padrona went on painting very steadily at her easel. She had the notion which women so often entertain, that a young man, with all those advantages which a man has over her own sex, could do anything he chose to do,—and especially Laurie, her own protégé; and yet here, it was evident, was something he could not do. The writing in the "Sword," though it was said to be nothing remarkable, was not like Laurie's writing. Poor Laurie's narrative, instead of the sober little history it ought to have been, read like a bad joke. He might have been sneering at Suffolk for

anything the reader could have made out, and patronising him oppressively at the same moment. Never woman was in a more uncomfortable position than was Mrs. Severn standing at her easel. Laurie himself was so conscious of its weakness and flatness that he attempted, by dramatic tricks with his voice, to give it effect. "Good heavens! Suffolk will go mad," the padrona said to herself; and then there was a word or two about Mr. Welby. And the author sat breathless, trembling, yet with a smile of complacency on his face, to hear her opinion. Poor Laurie! whom she had already driven to the utmost bounds of patience in respect to his picture! She shivered as she stopped to arrange the drapery on the little lay figure. Certainly, to be Laurie's adviser-in-chief was a post which had its difficulties as well as its pleasures.

"Is that all?" she said, when an awful pause of a minute in duration warned her that the moment to deliver her judgment had come.

"All!" said Laurie, flattered by the question, and beginning to take courage. "I should have thought you had found it quite long enough."

"Well, perhaps it is long enough," said the trembling critic; "but still I think there might be another paragraph. You have not said anything about the German sketches, for instance, which were so clever; and you know, if I am to be a critic, you must let me find fault. There are one or two turns of expression. What is that you say about Mr. Suffolk having lived out of the world?"

"This young artist has little acquaintance with the ways of the world," read Laurie. "'He loves nature, which is open to high and low. Instead of conciliating the critics and picture-dealers, he has satisfied himself with the models on the steps at the Trinita di Monte. Perhaps we ought to warn him that this is not the best way to please the British public.'"

"Mr. Suffolk will not like that," said the padrona. "It looks as if you meant something against his character. It looks like a sort of accusation——"

"Why, it is a joke!" cried Laurie; "every one must see that at a glance."

"But people are stupid," said his critic, taking courage. "I think you should change it. And then about Mr. Welby. Don't you say he has almost given up painting? There is nothing he hates to hear said like that."

"Our veteran master in the art," read Laurie, "'feeling his own strength decay, has called upon a younger brother to fill his place,—a substitution at which artists will rejoice.' I mean, of course, that everybody will be pleased to find he is spared the trouble."

"But he will not like it," said the padrona. "I think I would say, instead of that about the Trinita di Monte, that he has spent a great deal of his time in Rome, and has caught the warmth of the atmosphere and brilliancy of the colour, and so on; and Mr. Welby,—

I would say how graceful it was on his part to lend his aid to a younger man, and how ready he is to appreciate excellence. You told me to say what I think. And don't you think if you were to begin just plainly by saying Mr. Suffolk's works were exhibited at the Hydrographic, instead of that about the gem that is born to blush unseen—"

"In short," said Laurie, with a flush on his face, "you don't like any part of it,—beginning, or middle, or end."

"Yes, indeed I do," said the treacherous woman. "I think it is very nice; but I am sure you could improve it. Don't be offended. You could not expect to turn out a Thackeray all at once."

"Nor a Michael Angelo," said Laurie, desponding; "nor anything. I shall always be a poor pretender, good for little;—and this attempt is more ridiculous than all the rest. Well, never mind. If it were not for poor Suffolk's sake—"

"For Suffolk's sake you are bound to do it,—and do it well," said Mrs. Severn; "and for mine,—I mean for everybody's who cares for you. To begin at three o'clock in the morning, after a night of talk and smoke, and then to be melancholy because you are not pleased with your work! There are pens and paper on that table, Laurie, and I will not so much as look at you. Go and try again."

"Do you mean to say you care?" said Laurie; and he went and stood by her, while she continued to work.

He thought it was a little hard that she never turned, never looked at him, but went on painting faster than usual, making false lines in her haste. He had no thought that she was afraid of him, and of any foolish word or look which might change their position to each other. He stood wistfully with his heart full of unspeakable things, yearning for he knew not what, longing for a little more of her, if it were but a glance from her eye, a touch of her hand. She had wounded and mortified him, and then she had bidden him try again; but would not spare him a glance to show that she cared,—would not stop painting, and going wrong. He stood and looked on watching her in a kind of fascination. She had been hard upon him, and he had felt the sting, and forgiven her; and now he might make reprisals if he would. He put out his hand suddenly and took the brush from her hand. "I am not going to be trodden on for ever," he said; "I am the worm that turns at last. I am going to put in that elbow; you are doing it all wrong."

The padrona never said a word. She gave the brush up to him, and stood looking on while he carried out his threat,—looking at the canvas, not at him. He did it, and then his heart failed him. He had not an idea how much alarmed she was, and terrified for the next word. He had not made any investigations like Miss Hadley's into the state of his own feelings. He did not want anything,—except to be near her, to have her attention, her sympathy, and do

whatever she wanted. Now he became alarmed, in his turn, at his own boldness, and humbly laid the brush out of his rash hand.

"Padrona mia, I am a wretch, and you are angry with me!" he said. Then Mrs. Severn laughed, and broke the spell.

"We are quits," she cried, with a nervousness in her voice which Laurie could not account for. "You have given me the upper hand of you, Laurie. Now go and sit down yonder, and write your paper all over again from the beginning. I accept your elbow. You are bound to do what I tell you now."

"As if I did not always do what you tell me!" said Laurie, and he went and sat down at the writing-table, eager to please her. As for the padrona, she took up her brush with a little shudder, feeling she had escaped for this time, but that it might not be safe to trust to chance again. The foolish boy! And yet with all his folly there was so much to like in him! Perhaps even the folly itself was not so despicable in Mrs. Severn's eyes as it was in those of Jane Hadley, who had never been fluttered by alarms of this description, the good soul! But this sort of thing, it was clear, must not be allowed to happen again.

The paper, however, was written, and much improved, and at last, toned down by repeated corrections, was declared ready for the "Sword," and worthy of that illustrious journal. By that time it was dusk, and there was no choice but to let him stay to tea. The padrona sent her attendant from her to listen to something new Alice was playing, with a genuine horror of Jane Hadley's comments, and annoyed consciousness of which she could not divest herself. But the young man stayed only ten minutes by Alice, fair though the child was, and sweet as was her music in the soft wintry gloaming, and came straying back again to the little group on the hearth-rug, to share Frank's foot-stool. "He says he is to go to the pantomime, mamma," said Frank, whose whole being was pervaded by the sense that Christmas was coming. "And I say he is to go to the pantomime. Mamma, I love Laurie," said little Edith. "But, my pet, I am not Laurie's mamma to take him to the pantomime," cried the padrona loud, so that Miss Hadley could hear. Alas! Miss Hadley did not take the trouble to listen. She looked, and saw Laurie half on the stool, half kneeling, with the fire-light shining on his face, and that turned upwards to Mrs. Severn who sat back in the shadow, with an expression, as the governess thought, which nobody could mistake. Was it the padrona's fault?

CHAPTER XXIV.

A PATRON OF ART.

NOTHING could be more satisfactory in every way than the notice in the "Sword." It was not eloquent, nor too long, and Slasher

was pleased. "By Jove, Laurie, I was afraid you'd go in for fine writing, or for chaff, which is as bad," he said, with an air of relief. And it was very clear and distinct as to Suffolk's merits. It made such a commotion through the whole district round Fitzroy Square as has seldom been equalled, except just at the opening of the Academy. The paper was lent about almost from house to house. "Have you seen what the '*Sword*' says of Suffolk's picture?" one would say to another. "I hear it was all through Laurie Renton." It almost seemed to Laurie as if people looked at him more respectfully in the streets. At all events, the fellows at Clipstone Street showed a difference in their manner; and yet there were some even there who shook their heads. "He would never have made much by art," said Spyer, who went now and then, and drew for an hour or two, by way of keeping himself up, "or I should have been sorry; the pen and the pencil don't agree. But it's a good thing for Suffolk. The dealers are beginning to look after him. It's enough to make a man sick, by Jove! years of work go for nothing, when a paltry half-dozen words in a newspaper——! If I was a young fellow like the most of you, I'd do something to put a stop to that."

"What can any one do to put a stop to it?" said one of the young men. "We have no private patrons nowadays. We have only got the public and the press, to do our best with them. Laurie Renton draws very well for an amateur; I hope he will not end in the '*Sword*.'"

"Laurie Renton was born an amateur," said Spyer; "he never was anything better, and couldn't be. Let him take to writing. That's what heaps of people do after coquetting with art. He may make something of that; but he never will paint a picture that has any chance to live."

"He draws very well, all the same," said Laurie's defender. But on the whole, though it gained him an amount of respect and importance among them, his little attempt at literature did not raise Laurie's reputation. It looked like a defection to the painters round him. Though it was but for once, and took up but two columns in the "*Sword*," he was given up as having gone over to literature, which, in the opinion of the Clipstone Street fellows, was a very easy and well-rewarded trade. Suffolk himself did not quite know what to think. He lost not a moment in going to see his critic, and thanking him for the good word he had said for him. But yet he was a little unwilling to acknowledge that it was Laurie's paper which brought that picture-dealer to see him. The very next week after, the "*Looker-on*" had a notice of the Hydrographic, and followed Laurie's lead, praising the picture with still greater effusion than he had allowed himself; and even Mrs. Suffolk, when she saw this, was moved in her heart by a momentary feeling that Laurie had been very measured, and even cold, in his approbation. She was grateful,

and so was her husband,—but——. There was a degree of pleasure in their satisfaction with the “Looker-on,” which was wanting in their gratitude to Laurie. Gratitude is a cumbrous thing to move about with. And Laurie felt that even the padrona expected him, now he had begun, to go on writing articles. One morsel of print implied to all these innocent people an engagement on the “Sword” at least, and ready entry into literature in general. If he had gone on writing, and stood up like a man for his friends, the society which surrounded him would have felt that he had done his duty. But there seemed to all his comrades a certain cowardice in contenting himself with one effort. That he should have exerted himself on Suffolk’s account was quite comprehensible; but to stop there, and do nothing further, and say no good word for anybody else! It was that he did not choose to take the trouble, people thought,—not even for the padrona; —for nobody suspected that Laurie would have been torn by wild horses rather than have put her sacred name into profane print. This was a refinement of sentiment which no man could be expected to enter into. Mrs. Severn herself was perhaps a little disappointed too. It would have been but natural that she, his closest friend, to whom he came with all his troubles, should reap the benefit of the pains she had taken in getting him to write; but never a word in celebration of the padrona’s pictures came into the “Sword.” “He does not care for them, I suppose,” she said to herself with a little sigh, not taking it unkindly, but with a doubt which clouded her sunny sky sometimes, —a secret suggestion in her mind that her pictures did not deserve admiration. She sighed, poor soul, because she could not make them better, not because it was not in her heart to conceive of higher things. But then she could not afford to wait and think, and collect her full strength, and do her very best. Sometimes she pulled at the tether that bound her, with that impulse towards excellence which is in every sensitive nature. But she could not stop long enough in her ordinary work to achieve anything beyond it. She thought Laurie did not consider her pictures worth talking about, and contented herself without any bitterness. He was not doing what in the merest commonplace way he might have done for her; but the padrona, who was fond of Laurie, did for him what few painters are disposed to do for one another,—she offered him a share in the one special piece of goods which no artist likes to share;—she had the magnanimity to send him a note to Charlotte Street, in the end of March, on one of those coldest of spring mornings, to come and meet her patrons, the Riches of Richmont, at lunch.

The padrona was not given to the writing of notes, nor indeed had she much occasion so far as Laurie was concerned, who seldom was absent from the Square for an entire day. But he had felt, without knowing how, a certain difference in his reception since the day on which he wrote his paper at Mrs. Severn’s writing-table. Not that

she was less kind or less interested in him ;—perhaps it was, though the young man did not think of that, that there was always somebody there, and that the third person, instead of keeping in the background, was brought into the conversation, and spoiled it. Perhaps Mrs. Severn, too, thought the interloper spoiled it. Talk is pleasant, a quattr' occhi ; but then the interloper was needful. This depressed Laurie's spirits in spite of himself. There was not much that was exhilarating in his prospects generally. Nothing more had come of his literary ambition after that one paper, and his work as an artist went on by fits and starts, with no particular aim in it to spur him on ; and his friends, who were all in the heat and fervour of their work for the exhibition, naturally felt that a man who was not preparing for the Academy, who had no share in their white heat of excitement as to the decision of the Hanging Committee, was still something of an outsider. And a cloud had risen on his intercourse with the Square. Laurie was low, and felt despondent about affairs in general. And the chilly spring and the east winds affected his,—temper, he said. Probably it was something else besides his temper that was affected. He had begun to say to himself that he was a useless wretch, and not good for much, and that it was ridiculous to hope that he could ever make any mark in the world ; and would come home from seeing his friends of nights, who were all so busy, with a certain sensation of misery. The padrona's pictures had been put into their frames, though she was still working at that one for Mr. Rich, and her studio was beginning to get freshened up and decorated in preparation for the private view, which every painter affords to his or her friends and patrons. Even old Welby had taken down the white canvas and the Angelichino, and placed two of his own pictures to have the final touches given to them and to be exhibited before they went to the Academy. As for Suffolk, he was working with a kind of passion at the big picture which had been so unspareingly criticised ;—the canvas was as big as that one of Laurie's, on which the chalk outlines still lingered,—and there were but two figures in it. The maid in the low arched doorway, in her white kirtle, was dismissing her lover with an inexorable sweetness and sadness ; the young man was resisting, and refusing to be dismissed, his dark face glowing with love, and trouble, and angry protest against fate. They were the representatives of two races, hostile, yet fated to mingle ; and there was in the picture, moreover, a deeper issue,—that struggle of love and duty which it is sometimes best for the world should not be decided on duty's side. Laurie would stand and look at it, and wonder why he could not have done it as well. Sometimes a vision of the Edith of his imagination, with a still deeper force of expression in her face, would flit across this canvas ; but he had discrimination enough to know that Suffolk, in his place, would have painted that Edith had all the world been against him. After all,

it was his own fault, but that was no particular consolation; and he felt himself left outside, out of their calculations, almost out of their sympathy, at this particular crisis of fate, when everybody was too much excited about his own luck, and his neighbour's, to have leisure to think of the rest of the world. The moment for sending in to the Academy was like the eve of a great battle in Fitzroy Square and its environs; and Laurie, who was not even a volunteer to come in the mêlée, could not but find himself sometimes out of place among those excited groups, with their one subject. He was interested in their fate; but he was not himself putting his own to the touch—and he was a little low in consequence, and heartily wished the crisis over, and things going on again in their usual way. Let who would object, Laurie said to himself, with a kind of desperate resolution, he would have something to send next year.

It was while he was full of these melancholy thoughts that the padrona's little note came to him. He had been there the night before, and Miss Hadley had been present,—even in the studio, to which, in former times, she never dreamt of penetrating. To be sure, there was a kind of a reason for that now in the renovation that everything was undergoing; but still it was rather hard never to be able to say a word to one's friend, never to receive an expression of her opinion or of her kindness without Miss Hadley's keen eyes upon one's face. And Laurie had grown almost angry at this perpetual intrusion. He was idling over one of his school studies when Mrs. Severn's note was brought to him. It was the briefest little note,—but at least Miss Hadley had not interfered with that.

"Come," it said, "and lunch with us at two, and meet the Riches. They have just sent me word they are coming to see my pictures. They are my great patrons, and they may be of use to you. I will tell them who you are,—a grand seigneur turned painter,—and they will be immensely interested. Don't laugh at them; they are such good souls."

"You were a little cross, do you know, the other day? and I cannot have you cross. We are all so busy there is no time for talk.

"M. S."

This was the note, and there was not much in it. It was the padrona's soft heart which had made her add that last little coaxing, half-apologetic sentence, and perhaps it was foolish of her. But then, though it was certainly necessary that Laurie should be cured,—and that without mercy,—of any foolish notions that might have stolen into his foolish young head, still for one moment, once in a way, it was a comfort to be free of Miss Hadley; and she had said nothing that his mother might not have said. But perhaps Mrs. Severn would not have been so sure of the perfect judiciousness of her words had she seen how

Laurie lighted up under them, and expanded into content. It was eleven then, and his invitation was for two; but yet he decided it was best to send a note in return. It is a species of communication which is very attractive sometimes. Laurie jumped at it with an exhilaration for which he did not attempt to account. It was a different thing altogether from those other little notes conveying mamma's messages, which he still preserved somewhere; but not, it must be confessed, with such lively feeling as he once did. Quite a different matter! It was his friend who had written to him now,—only a dozen words, and yet herself was in them,—herself, always full of kind thought, of that gracious interest in him, wanting to help him on though he was so unsatisfactory, finding fault with him in that soft, caressing way, which was sweeter than praise. Laurie,—foolish fellow,—put away his work, and spent half-an-hour of the short time that was to elapse before he should see her in writing the following note. It could have been written in five minutes; but there was, it cannot be denied, a certain pleasure in lingering over it, and a certain skill was required to put a great deal of meaning into few words. He did not think he had succeeded, after all, when it was written. But here it is:—

"I will never be cross any more, padrona mia. I have been thinking you meant to cast me off. But you don't? I will go and meet the Riches or the Poors, or anybody else you like, and thank them for the chance. You I never could thank,—not half or quarter enough. So silence shall speak for me.

"Yr——

"L. R."

It is not to be supposed that Laurie wrote "your" in plain letters. He made a hieroglyphic of it. It might have been only "&c.;" in short, it was as like that as anything else. He was beguiled into the use of the pronoun, he did not quite know how, as he hung over it with his pen in his hand like a pencil, anxious to add just a touch somewhere, as might have been done in the line of the lip or the droop of an eyelid, to express what he was feeling. It was of purpose and intention that he made it undecipherable. Perhaps she would find it out; and if not, still at least he had expressed himself, which was always something. He was not thinking of any result, or anything that might come of it, as Miss Hadley did. At the present stage such an idea would have been simple profanity. He did not think of it at all. He was her disciple, her servant, her subject. That she should reverse the position, and be his, and subject to him, was an idea which had never entered Laurie's mind. It would indeed, as we have said, have appeared sheer profanity to him. Such delicacies of feeling do not come within the range of the Miss Hadleys of life. And so Laurie made his hieroglyphic, expressive of the deepest devotion, and felt his heart and his face expand with a

delicious softness, and put on his hat, and himself gave the note to the maid-servant in the Square. It was but a few steps round the corner; and when he was out, he went a few steps farther and got himself a lily of the valley to put in his coat. It was still early, and the flower cost him as much as a meal; but when a young man's heart gives a sudden jump in his bosom, reasonably or unreasonably, it would be hard if he could not give utterance to his satisfaction with himself and the universe in general by so simple an expedient as a flower in his coat. And at the same time he ordered some pots of the same lilies to be sent to the Square, not for that day, but for to-morrow, on which Mrs. Severn was to exhibit her pictures to her friends before sending them to the Academy. This little matter occupied the morning until it was time to present himself at the Square. A very fine carriage stood before No. 375 when he reached the door, with a gorgeous coat of arms on the panel, and liveries and hammer-cloth, which looked like a duke's at least. The big footman stared superciliously at Laurie as he went up the steps. He was but "a poor hartis" it was evident to that splendid apparition. The patron had arrived with all the pomp which ought to attend such a celestial visitor, and naturally the house from top to bottom bore evidence of a certain excitement. Forrester, in his best coat, opened the door to Laurie, his face beaming with cordiality and smiles. "I can't say as he knows much, Mr. Renton," said Forrester, "but he's a stunning one to buy; and I wouldn't take no notice, sir, if I was you, of his little ways,—nor the lady's neither, sir," said the old man. Laurie laughed and nodded in answer to this advice, without any distinct idea what Mr. Rich's little ways might be; and so walked into the great drawing-room, which it was strange to see by daylight, full of the grey spring atmosphere, out of which an east wind had taken all the colour. The white curtains hung over the long windows; the fire burned with a little cheerful noise; and the padrona, in her black dress, sat on a sofa beside a rich, rustling, luxurious woman, fifteen or twenty years older than herself. Mrs. Severn's figure had filled out into the gracious fulness of matronhood. She was not a sylph, like her child; but she looked something like a sylph beside the vast form on the sofa. And in front of her stood a little man, very plump and rosy, with a double-eyeglass in his hand. The padrona looked a little flushed and excited. Perhaps it is not in human nature to receive unmoved a visit from a patron.

"This is Mr. Renton," she said, as Laurie came in. "Mr. Laurence Renton, Mrs. Rich;" and, to Laurie's great surprise, the large lady got up from the sofa to shake hands with him, which was a great deal more than the padrona did. Mrs. Rich was very large and very wealthy, and looked as if she might be rather oppressive; but, nevertheless, she had been smiling very benignly on the padrona, and Laurie consequently saw some good in her face.

"Mr. Renton, I ought to know you, for we are almost neighbours in the country," said Mrs. Rich. "Don't you know Richmont? Ah, I daresay you have been a great deal from home, like so many young men. Mr. Rich, Mr. Renton has not seen Richmont. It is only six months since we took possession. Mr. Rich bought it for the situation, and gave I am ashamed to say how much money for it; and then the house wanted everything done to it,—new rooms built, and I can't tell you all what. I believe your mamma does not visit anywhere, Mr. Renton. She is a great invalid, I hear; and of course, unless she was so kind as to signify a wish, I could not call first. But I am sure if you are at Renton when we are there, it will give us the greatest pleasure to see you at Richmont."

"Thanks," said Laurie, feeling rather aghast. He did not know what more to say till a half-comic appealing glance reached him from the padrona's eyes. Then he bestirred himself. "I have been a long time from home," he said, "and at present my mother goes nowhere; but I don't know,—pardon me,—where Richmont is. I am so stupid about localities,—I never know anything that is not close to my eye."

"It was called Beecham once," said the rich woman; "but we are not the old family;—we are the new family, Mr. Renton; and Mr. Rich thinks it only right, when he has bought it, to give it his own name. We are not ashamed of being new people. I have just been talking to our friend here about painting one of the rooms for us,—in panels, you know. She is so clever. I never knew a woman so clever; but that is between you and me," said the patroness, patting the painter patronisingly on the arm. "She does not hear a word we are saying. I never would tell her she was anything out of the ordinary to her face." Such were the astounding manners and customs of the new species of humanity to which Laurie had been unexpectedly presented. It took him half-an-hour at least to realise the unfamiliar being. No doubt there are patrons in England of the type known in old days, when one monarch leaned on his painter's shoulder, and another picked up his painting-brush. But these are chiefly patrons of the old masters, not of the new; and Mr. Rich and his wife were the specimens best known in Fitzroy Square. When they went in to luncheon the padrona looked more and more flushed, though Forrester was present to wait, looking as solemn as any family butler, and listening with a sore heart,—but no outward token,—to Mr. Rich's views about art. He had his views, too, as well as his wife, though he was not so immediately audible. It was when he had swallowed some wine that he found his tongue, and then Mrs. Rich was silenced by the more influential stream.

"Glad to make your acquaintance, Mr. Renton," he said. "We'd have been very glad if your mother had come to see us. It would have done her no harm, and it might have done Mrs. Rich a little

good. We don't pretend to be above that sort of thing. But of course all this fuss about the will must have been hard upon you. I'm told you're one of the rising young men of the time. Stick to that. You may buy houses and lands, but you can't buy talent. I'll be very glad to go and see anything you may have to show. If our friend Mrs. Severn is to be trusted,—and I've always found her to be trusted, sir,—her eye is so true,—you've got something that will suit me very well; and I hope we shall know each other better before we part."

"I did not mean that Mr. Renton had anything to show this year," said the padrona. Laurie had never seen her so embarrassed. Was it that the people were overpowering?—or was it——? But there was no time to cogitate possibilities in the midst of this stream of talk.

"Mr. Renton must come and see us at Richmont," said Mrs. Rich. "He must come with you, some day, Mrs. Severn. I have got some of her sweet pictures hung in my morning room; and she has been so kind in her suggestions about the furniture. It is such a thing to have an artist's eye; and such pretty eyes too," added the stout lady, in an audible aside to Laurie, who was seated next to her. "Don't you think so? To me she is prettier than ever she was. She is like Alice's sister. She looks young,—and she is young,—and to think of all she has done!"

Laurie sat by her, and never said a word. He could not pay compliments to the padrona as a mere indifferent spectator might have done, entering into the fun of the situation. And Mrs. Severn sat at the head of the table, with a flush of embarrassment on her cheek. But perhaps even she was not so sensitive as Laurie; and they were patrons, and brought her commissions,—and they were bread! These are mean recommendations, no doubt, but they have a wonderful effect.

"What I like is a picture I can understand," said Mr. Rich. "What I say to a painter is;—'Tell your story. Choose what subject you like, old, or new, or middle-aged; but, whatever your incident is, stick to it, and tell it, without need of any description in a book.' That's my principle, sir. And I like a good, warm, wholesome colour; none of your cadaverous-looking things. There are plenty of sad things and nasty things in life without putting them in pictures. Like as I prefer a good ending in a story. I have some pretty pictures to show you, sir, when you come to see me. Crowquill painted that last series out of the 'Vicar of Wakefield' for me. I could have got twice the price I gave for them from a gentleman I know in Manchester; but nothing but necessity would make me part with these pictures. When a thing's painted for you, it has a value it would not have had otherwise. And I have as fine a little Millais as you ever saw. I hope to have a picture from you in my collection before all is done."

"You have not a Welby, I think," said the padrona, who worked

rather hard at her part of the conversation. " You should make haste to secure that ; for he paints very little now."

" I don't care very much for Welby," said Mr. Rich, indifferent to the awful countenance of Forrester behind his chair. " He's a deal too classical for me. I had not a classical education myself; and I am not ashamed to say I don't appreciate that sort of thing. Nature is what I like. I don't pretend to go in for the old masters. They're very fine, I daresay ; but give me a nice modern picture with colours, sir, like what you see in life. I hope you are of the real school, Mr. Renton,—not to carry it to excess, you know. The thing for modern collections,—and I know a great many collectors of my way of thinking,—is modern life ; the sort of thing one understands. How am I to know about your Greeks and your Romans ? I like pretty English girls, and nice young fellows making love to them. Why shouldn't they make love to 'em, Mrs. Severn ? I did it in my day. And as for your pictures, could anything be sweeter ? It's the next step in life. We've all gone through that phase," said Mr. Rich, waving his hands ; " and that's the sort of thing we want in our collections. I say this to you, Mr. Renton, as a young man beginning life."

" Mr. Renton will prefer the pretty girls, of course," said the patron's wife, with a good-humoured laugh. And Laurie sat by, not knowing what reply to make, while the padrona, with that flush on her face, sat at the head of the table, and let them talk. What was the use of arguing the question ? The finest reasoning in the world does not convince people whose minds are incapable of receiving it. And they bought the pictures they commended, which is what better critics seldom do.

" There must be a variety of tastes," Mrs. Severn said, with a meekness that was not natural to her. " I am not so pleased with my tame little groups that you are so good-natured about. There are many things I would rather do if I could."

Then Mr. Rich laughed, and told the story of Liston, whose dream it was that tragedy was his forte,—not a novel story certainly, but not inappropriate at the moment. " I should like to see Welby's pictures all the same," he said, cheerfully. " We could not come to-morrow, so I should like to make a round to-day. I'm going to Crowquill, and Baxter, and some more,—as long as the light holds out ;—and if you can tell me of any others——"

" There is Suffolk," said Laurie, looking at the head of the table ; and then he paused surprised. The padrona was but human. To let her own live patron go out of her hands to the studios of celebrated painters whom everybody knew was a thing inevitable, against which she could never dream of struggling ; but to send him, in cold blood, —her own precious property,—to Suffolk,—a new name, a rising painter,—one of the men whom it would be a credit to patronise ! Mrs. Severn had a struggle with herself. Generosity was easy where

Laurie Renton was concerned; and she would have shared her purse with the Suffolks, with all the unthinking open-heartedness of her kind. But send him her patron! That was a trial. Laurie looked at her surprised. He knew her face so well that he saw the struggle in it, though without knowing what it meant; and he was startled by the pause she made before she answered him. A flood of thoughts rushed through the padrona's mind at that moment. She thought of herself and the children, and the need she had of patronage; and then, on the other hand, she thought of Suffolk's wife, with an unmanageable man, who would not paint popular subjects, with no power to help herself, with children too,—babies always coming,—and all sorts of troubles. It was not of the artist she thought, and his long unrewarded labours. She was only a woman, after all; and it was the woman who came to her mind, anxious and powerless, and overwhelmed with anxiety. All at once the face, obscured by some cloud which Laurie could not penetrate,—to his supreme annoyance,—cleared up with a sudden light, which he did not understand. "Yes," she said, "I should like Mr. Rich to see that picture. It is not quite the kind of subject he likes; but we all think it one of the finest things;—Mr. Renton will tell you about it. It was spoken very highly of the other day in the 'Sword.'"

"Ah; then it must be fine," said Mrs. Rich. "Perhaps Mr. Renton will take a seat in the carriage with us, and introduce us. I like to see everything I can see; and we have not much time for the light. And you will not forget, dear, that you are engaged to us for Easter week. It will be so nice to have you; and you shall plan out your pictures for the east room. She is going to do the fairy tales for us, Mr. Renton,—it will be charming. If the carriage is up, Mr. Rich, I am afraid we ought to go."

The padrona called Laurie to her as he was about to follow them down-stairs. "They have given me a beautiful commission," she said, with a little excitement,—"a year's work! And I was so mean that I hesitated to send them to Suffolk after that. Try and make them buy the picture, Laurie. They will if you are clever, and talk to them a little of Renton, and draw them on. I trust you to do it." It was only for a moment at the drawing-room door. Was it the year's work, and the contest with herself about Suffolk's picture, which gave her that look of agitation and excitement? Or was it the time of year, the eve of the Academy, and all the crowd that would come to-morrow? Laurie could not give himself any answer as he rushed down-stairs to guide the Riches on their beneficent course; but his eyes shone, too, and his heart beat loud. As if he could have had anything to do with it,—a mere boy!

WHAT DOES IRELAND WANT?

WE believe that few Irishmen would agree as to the answer which should be given to the question which we have asked above. In our daily walks through life we find two classes of discontent as exhibited by two distinct classes of men. There is the discontent of the sad, silent, gloomy, and perhaps sullen man, who knows well what he wants, and is hopeless of getting it. In serious, solemn moments he will tell his grief aloud, and with a deep sense name the supposed source of his wrong; but for the most part he bears his sorrows silently if not patiently, and hardly hopes,—never asks for a remedy. It may happen that some day he will act,—do something more or less wise, more or less foolish, when repeated instigations to action have been dinned into his ears; but even from what he does he hardly hopes for success, and does it under a slowly engendered conviction that manhood demands from him so much of a struggle. Such is the discontent of an Englishman. And we know also the garrulous uneasiness of the vivacious grumbler,—the grief of the eagerly unhappy man, who rejoices in his grievance and lives upon his sorrows. This one has always his hands up to heaven, beseeching the gods to smite his enemies hip and thigh, and carry bloodshed through the world, so that he may come by his own. He is instant morning, noon, and night, in telling his tale of woe, and at last achieves so excellent a readiness of tongue that he teaches the world to believe him. He is known to be a man with wrongs, and is commiserated and talked of,—is made the subject of various schemes by busy friends, and is generally spoken of as the ill-used one. But he is happy through it all, enjoying a lively, excited life; and ill would that man befriend him who would rob him of his grievance. Such is the discontent of an Irishman.

Irish discontent has been England's political stumbling-block ever since the Union. From that day to this Ireland's grievances, and England's trouble concerning them, have become proverbial. Ireland has been said to be England's Poland. Foreign politicians, particularly those of the United States, are ever throwing in England's teeth the cruelty of her tyranny towards Ireland. Irishmen emigrate to America by hundreds of thousands, and when there almost invariably become England's bitterest enemies. It has been dinned into our ears by Irishmen that England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity. It has been said in England, in that bitterness of spirit which bitterness engenders,

that a dip beneath the sea for twenty-four hours would be the best cure for Irish evils. The crop of troubles is always growing from a soil fertile beyond all precedent in such produce. Hydra-headed is the nation's grievance. Do away with Roman Catholic disabilities ; and from a thousand newly-opened Roman Catholic mouths there come forth demands for further gifts. Disestablish an ascendant Church, and the presumed weakness of the concession gives rise to a legion of fresh claims. In the meantime the Irishman is a laughing, joking, jolly fellow, who upon the whole has a much better time of it than his silent, sullen, suffering neighbour, over whose sad face a smile is seldom seen to pass.

The ordinary Irish peasant is by no means an unhappy man. In many respects his condition is superior to that of his neighbour the English agricultural labourer,—but especially in this, that he is not ashamed of himself. In his own parish he conceives himself to be the proper man in the proper place ; and he goes about, whether working or idle, without that hang-dog feeling of subservience which English agricultural labour seems to impose upon her votaries. He is rarely hungry to suffering, though he is still fed upon the potato. His cabin, small, smoky, ill-conditioned, is his own, with a feeling of ownership that rarely belongs to the English cottier. We know that he may be ejected,—and we know, too, what he may do when ejected ; but the very violence of his proceeding in that emergency shows how strong within him was that sense of possession. And then he has a religious faith which he can understand, and which suffices for him. He believes in the godhead of the priest whom he sees and hears,—for it comes to that ; and either obeys his God,—or disobeys him, still believing in him, with an idea that at some further day he may put that wrong right by repentance and confession. We doubt whether the ordinary English labourer often brings his religion home to himself for his own use in the same way. His Protestantism is too usually but a disclaimer of the parson's authority, as is his religion too usually a subservience to the same power. The poor Roman Catholic does catch the meaning of the one great order of obedient faith which is given to him. The poor Protestant hardly knows what there is to catch, and goes to church, if he does do so, with a dim feeling that he shall please the parson and be respectable. Upon the whole, as far as evidence to the outward senses may be trusted, the Irishman has the best of it. Nevertheless, he is always proclaiming before high heaven that he is a thrall and a serf, and is ever imploring the whole world to come and knock the fetters from his wrists and ankles. He lives in a state of comfortable chronic rebellion, which luckily never requires more than the ordinary police force of the country for its suppression.

What does Ireland want ? Within certain indefinable but well understood limits a people should have what it wants. Here in

England we are accustomed to say that whatever public opinion demands public opinion may have ; but in a rough way we understand the limits which bound this theory. Public opinion in France at one time demanded equality, and could not have it,—demanded fraternity, and certainly could not have it, in obedience to an order so given. With us public opinion is not exigeant, but what she does ask she exacts. Public opinion in the Southern States of America demanded secession, but the Southerners could not get it because it was the public opinion of only a part of a people. It was generally thought by politicians here in England that the demand should have been successful,—because the wish of the people concerned was truly manifested. The Northerners used the argument that we use when in regard to Ireland we declare that if you repeal the Union you may as well restore the Heptarchy. Fenianism in Ireland demands the separation of that country from this,—what we may perhaps call Irish secession ; and American politicians, returning the favour of our advice to them in the time of their Civil War, tell us that we should yield to Fenianism as an expression of public opinion in Ireland. But they understood the need of an undivided empire, and so do we. If Ireland may set herself up as a republic, why not Wales ?—and if Wales, why not Yorkshire ? The law of national self-preservation would prohibit England from granting such a request,—even though the request were made. But there never was a political mistake greater than that which supposes that public opinion in Ireland has by the expression of Fenianism demanded separation from England. Public opinion in England demanded in the time of Charles I. a rescue from the power of the throne, and got it,—with a good deal of trouble. It again demanded a rescue from Papacy in the time of James II., and it got that,—not without trouble. It demanded a Reform Bill in the time of William IV., and free trade in corn in this our present reign, and succeeded on both occasions, being very much in earnest. But in Ireland the regular courts of law, with the appointed jurymen and the police, have sufficed to put down without bloodshed all that public opinion in the shape of Fenianism has done to disturb the country. Opinion so expressed is not public. Whatever Ireland wants, it does not in truth want a severance from England. Did she want that, would she not send members to the British Parliament pledged to demand it ? Can we imagine any country so circumstanced, having the mouthpiece of a Representation, and not demanding that which it needs by its acknowledged voice ? We hear an Irish member now and again demanding pardon for Fenians, but we hear of no member returned to Parliament who even on the hustings will proclaim himself a Fenian. Five-and-twenty years ago there was a reality in the Irish cry for Repeal,—for a separate Irish Parliament to act under the English Crown. O'Connell did prevail in bringing together enormous masses of the people who demanded Repeal. A

large section of the country was represented in the British Parliament by repealers. The ordinary Irish Roman Catholic of the day was a repealer. The farmer, the tradesman, the attorney, the small squire,—wherever you might meet them, they were all repealers. Every priest was a repealer. When it was thought to be necessary to try certain leaders of the Repeal movement, the ordinary Roman Catholic juries of the country could not be trusted to act. The country was full of soldiers, and it was understood by all concerned that if O'Connell chose to hold up his hand for war, an army must be employed. To put down Fenianism juries and the police suffice. The country, as a country, has given no sign that it desires to be separated from England and governed as a Republic. On this subject we think that a sad mistake is made by some as to whom it is of the last importance both to England and Ireland that they should be well informed. There is a loud brawling section of the press which, from our love of freedom of expression, we are unwilling to put down with a strong hand; and there are certain Hyberno-American leaders, more or less irrepressible, to whom the mildness of our laws and greater mildness of our practice give a scope for sedition. These agents, working among a people chronically but not vehemently discontented, have produced the troublesome movement which is called Fenianism; but we appeal to all those who have read of the rebellions of past ages and watched the rebellions of our own to say whether Fenianism has ever shown itself to be the passion of the people of Ireland. In Italy the people wanted a united country. In Poland they wanted to release themselves from Russian bondage. In the Southern States they wanted Secession. The true desire made itself equally evident among these people whether success or failure followed their efforts. They struggled, suffered, bled, died, and were in earnest. There is no symptom of national earnestness about Fenianism. A few leaders may be very much in earnest,—and very clever in escaping from prison and in such like emergencies. Individual earnestness we often find in small matters; but of national earnestness in the cause of Fenianism we have seen no evidence.

But the Irish as a people are not without a want. We have just made to them a great and noble concession, which they did not want, because justice demanded it. Such was the nature of the position towards each other of the two religions in Ireland that the priests and the Roman Catholics generally did not care to demand the disestablishment and disendowment of the Protestant Church. It would not seem our present purpose to investigate the cause of this abstinence on their part, but we think that we may take the fact as acknowledged. The motives which brought about the abandonment by Protestants of an ascendant Protestant Church in Ireland were certainly not produced by any loud cry from Ireland for relief in that direction. But yet the injustice of that ascendant Church was

flagrant; and, as it certainly behoved England to free herself from reproach in regard to the sister island,—to see that that allegation as to England's Poland should be answerable at all points, so that no Russian, no Frenchman, no American should be able with truth to point to our national sin against Ireland,—the ascendant Church was abandoned, though no demand for the abandonment was made by those who were aggrieved, though the measure was one absolutely heartrending to many whose loyalty to England has never failed them.

But the Irishman is as loud as to his wants as ever. We do not think it marvellous that no word of gratitude should have come from the Roman Catholics in regard to the measure of last session; but it is remarkable that there should have been no word of triumph. A step has been taken in politics hardly to be surpassed in significance by any since politics became a science in the world, and it is accepted, and swallowed, and made nothing of, by a people as though it were some small edict for regulating the authority of an exciseman, or deciding the shape of a policeman's hat. To all nations, since religion has become a study, its religion has ever been the point in its politics the most sensitive. That which Mr. Gladstone used to regard as the Conscience of the State has hitherto dictated to powers and principalities the theory by which the religion of a country should be governed. When Philip II. repressed Protestantism in the Low Countries he did so as exercising a State Conscience, conceiving himself, as the head of the State, to be bound in duty to support that religion which he believed to be true. From that day to this we have seen measures of repression and propagation gradually abandoned, in obedience to the spread of toleration among men,—but the State Conscience has still had its sway. The State, in what it has done for religion, has had its own belief,—has declared practically that its own efforts for religion should be made in accordance with its own declared belief. Among its subjects toleration in religion has become the law;—but not the less has the State declared that this or that religion was in possession of the support of the State as the recognised true faith. This was the system of government among the nations of Europe, and was certainly the theory in accordance with which our Church and State were supposed to be bound together, till we abandoned the idea of a State Conscience in religion by disestablishing the Protestant Church in Ireland. The ascendancy of Protestantism in Ireland has been given up in compliance with a feeling of abstract justice, though there were motives, which only justice could overpower, persuading us to maintain it. The interference in temporal matters of the Papal power through a hierarchy, of which we are bound to say that its ecclesiastical loyalty to Rome is its most conspicuous feature, is a nuisance to us. We would, were it possible, deal with the Irish prelates as

though they were national bishops, overlooking, in religion, a portion of our nation ;—but this is impossible, as they deem it to be their duty to be our enemies. They are not Fenians, but they are Roman, and are desirous of causing perplexity to us who are anti-Roman. The loyalty to the British Crown of the lately ascendant Church was very great. We ourselves do not fear Fenianism in Ireland ; but ascendant Protestantism in Ireland was at any rate so anti-Fenian that respect and gratitude were due to it. Nevertheless, though we well knew that we should strengthen hands which are not friendly to us, and break hearts that were loyal to us, we put down that ascendant Church, which was congenial to our own tastes, because justice demanded it. The concession has been taken as though it were nothing, and the wail of Irish want goes on the same as ever.

There are two demands prominent now,—of which one, to be a demand made by a nation, is a small demand ; whereas the other is a very large demand indeed. But the small demand is the one as to which the Irish people is at the present moment the most in earnest. They desire that the Fenian prisoners should be released from prison. We will speak first of this comparatively small matter, and then pass on to that large demand as to the tenure of land, which will occupy so much of the attention of the House of Commons during the coming session of Parliament.

We have ventured to express an opinion that Ireland as a country is not Fenian ; nevertheless it is clear that there is a very strong national feeling in Ireland in favour of the release of these prisoners. This is an easy want to realize, and Ireland has realized it. She does want to have her Fenians liberated. Why he should want this, the normal Irishman could hardly tell us. He would probably say that his sympathy arose from a belief that the incarcerated Fenians had meant to be patriotic. But in truth he is actuated by a feeling, that it is a good thing to ask the Government to undo anything it has done, and if possible to coerce it to this undoing. To him the acts of a Government, whatever they may be, are ill deeds. We, here in England, have much of that feeling, rarely giving the governing men credit for judgment or even for sincerity ; but in Ireland there is a settled conviction that men in power, let them be who they may, will use their power badly. Added to this there is the Irishman's instinct, acting always in opposition to the repression of crime. The very same man who is himself desirous of earning his bread in peace and quietness, and who would be the last to join a Fenian riot, will think himself bound by his humanity to demand the liberation of Fenians, because they are the victims of the law.

The other day the clergy of the deanery of Tuam drew up certain resolutions on behalf of their country at large. In the first they demand, as an easy thing, that rent, which cannot be made to rise and fall from year to year, should be always fixed by the price of

produce, which must vary from year to year; secondly, they attack the malignant influence of the Protestant Church,—which has just disestablished itself; thirdly, they declare that they will never "suspend their exertions," as long as "one remnant" is left of those colleges and schools, which have been established in Ireland with the hope of bringing education within reach of the whole people; and, fourthly, they demand an amnesty for the Fenian prisoners. They recommend "to their gaolers" to reflect on,—this and that. This is signed by a body of clergymen, presidents, parish priests, professors, and curates, who do, no doubt, adequately represent the deanery. In speaking of the "gaolers" of these prisoners, they mean the Cabinet,—Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues,—and they use the opprobrious term, clergymen as they are, simply because it seems to them to be a good thing to speak evil of governing men. No doubt the Cabinet can open any prison in the coun'ry and let any criminal free, because to the Cabinet belongs the responsibility of exercising the privileges of Government in this country,—of which pardon is one. In that sense, Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues are gaolers. But the word has been used by these messengers of peace, who are petitioning for mercy and pardon, because there is a sting in it and an imagined insult. These priests of St. Jarlath's are not Fenians themselves; they would lose, and know that they would lose, all that they possess were Fenianism to prevail; they are secure, and know their security, under British power; but to them,—not desirous of rebellion, willing to preach against rebellion when rebellion comes near to them,—it seems to be a manly and a useful thing to go as near to sedition as may be done without danger in reviling the power by which they are protected! This, however, is so completely the Irish instinct, and is so well understood of all men, that in pointing to it, we almost doubt whether we do not trouble ourselves with a useless work.

Would it be well to let these prisoners free? We are by no means prepared to say that because the Fenian prisoners have been wisely brought to trial, legally convicted, and sentenced to punishments not erring on the side of severity,—that therefore there should be no question of an amnesty. A political offender, let the offence have been ever so thoughtless, ever so reckless, ever so injurious to the community, is not by any of us regarded as is the ordinary offender against the laws. The forger, the thief, or the murderer, is a man who, in accordance with the feelings of us all, has disgraced himself. To use an ordinary test, we may say that we would not wish to sit down to table with such a one. We have not that feeling with regard to a political offender. It does not belong to us to speculate on the thoughts of God; but in our hearts we do not believe that the rebel incurs God's wrath as does the murderer. The slightest change in circumstances,—a shipwreck, a storm, or the prowess of a single arm,—might have

made the poor rebel convict a glorious patriot. For all that we now know to the contrary, a little more wisdom in a single head, a keener energy in a single heart, might have brought Washington to the disgrace of an English prison. A more stringent but still legal severity, would have so ended the career of the Third Napoleon, that he would only have been known among rebels as having been of all rebels the most ridiculous. The fault is in the judgment of the man. If he becomes a rebel in a good cause, going forth with his life in his hand, to risk his all that his country and his countrymen may be free, he is of all men the most divine. If he does it in a bad cause, he must stand the punishment, and the beauty and glory of his martyrdom consists in this,—that if he run the risk in a good cause, but in one too weak for success, he must still stand the punishment. It is thus that we regard rebels in this country; and so regarding them we are inclined to mercy,—if mercy be compatible with security. The same thing may be said of all punishment,—but in another sense. We do not hang the murderer because we hate him,—but in order that other men may not murder. And we incarcereate the rebel in order that would-be rebels may know that rebellion is a serious matter. Though a great rebel now and again may be divine, little rebels in flocks are troublesome, and must be repressed. But with the rebel, we are, all of us, willing to run some little risk. With the convicted murderer we prefer to run no risk. The troublesome rebel has been properly convicted, properly sentenced, and doubtless, in accordance with all logic, it would be better for the community that he should see the punishment out. But to some extent, the community is willing to sacrifice its own interests in condoning an offence which is not repulsive to its moral feelings.

That is, we think, the state of the public mind in this country as regards political offenders, and in considering the question of further amnesty for these Fenians, this feeling should have its weight. No doubt it did have its weight very strongly in procuring a pardon for those who have already been liberated. That amnesty was a very strong measure of grace. Fenianism here in England is peculiarly distasteful, not because it is Irish, but because it is not Irish. It has been got up by American money, by American brains, and, as regards the leaders, by American men,—by men who, if they were once Irishmen, have since become Americans. We feel it to be the result of an antipathy to us entertained, as we think unjustly, by a certain political party in the United States; and in putting down Fenianism we believe ourselves to be repressing foreign aggression. But we have been so chary of giving offence to a friendly power which, in its present phase of existence, is very touchy, that we have politically almost ignored a fact that has been as patent to us as the sun at noon-day. Though the Head Centres of Fenianism have held their courts and camps and councils at New York, we have hardly remonstrated, and

have been content to repress the movement as it has taken opportunity of exploding itself in Ireland. By the ordinary appliances of the law, which, with the view of meeting such cases as these, had but the other day been lightened of all severity, the neck of the rebellion was broken, and Fenianism, as regards its physical force, was brought nearly to an end. Still there were uttered those notes of Irish defiance from a certain portion of the press with which we are all so familiar, and which are so peculiarly distasteful to Englishmen who love the liberty of the press. They are the petulant wailings of a child who knows that its nurse is too tender-hearted to whip it. At last a slap comes, and then the abettors of the infant scream aloud against the cruelty with which the child is treated. There is a mock reverence for liberty in this which is hateful to the true Liberal. The motives and the acts of Fenianism are alike odious to us. There is a wailing, cowardly falsehood in it, a deficiency of purpose, an utter absence of noble self-devotion which have covered Fenianism with scorn. Against the American element in Fenianism we are bitter, because the interference of foreigners is distasteful to us, and because we think in our hearts that the Government of the United States should repress the indignity which is offered to us. For the Irish portion of Fenianism we have no hatred, but ineffable pity; and, in regard to each individual, that sort of feeling which, could we deal with him as man with man, would elicit from us gentleness rather than punishment. We know his nature, what have been his disadvantages, how great is his ignorance, and how apt he would be, if we could get a hold of him, to serve us, and to be guided, and to become useful and pleasant. Against him there is but little anger, and we may say no desire that he should be made subject to the rigid severity of the law.

Such was so strongly felt to be the condition of things, that even while the folly of Fenianism was still continued, the prison doors were opened, and convicted rebels were pardoned by a Government disposed, in the cause of mercy, to go almost beyond the limits of prudence. These men who were pardoned and set free, had been rebels in a rebellion still in progress,—progressing most contemptibly, no doubt, but still proclaiming itself to be in action. In the demands which are now made for a further amnesty, no allusion is made to this act of grace. And what the while is the conduct of those friends of the Fenians by whom the demand is most loudly made;—and what their tone? Let these men out of prison, they say, because they are great and good and serviceable to their country, and are heroes;—and if you do not comply with our demands, we will bring over more Americans and force open the prison doors. That is the nature of the plea which is made for amnesty. We have frightened you out of your church, they say, and now we will frighten you out of government. That is the threat of men who know well enough that concession in the matter of the Church was made in

obedience to a feeling of justice ; but it is said that it may be heard by men who do not know ; and it is said to maintain that excitement by which Fenianism is kept alive. With all that tendency towards pity and pardon which we acknowledge to feel towards a misled Irishman, we cannot but declare that at the present moment any further amnesty would be misplaced.

Let a government be right or wrong in its mode of governing, it must be presumed to suppose itself right, and must maintain itself,—or go. Pleas for mercy may be accepted by a strong government, and may obtain pardon. But such pleas must be accompanied by an acknowledgment of fault. On the part of these Fenians, the demand made is that they should be released because they have been right, and the repressing power wrong. It is not pardon that is asked, but release as by writ of error pleaded in the national court. Mr. Gladstone is asked to open the prison doors, not as marking forgiveness for a past trespass, but as acknowledging that the verdicts of the juries and the sentence of the judges were unjust. Ireland has been in a ferment, and, liking a ferment if it be not carried too far, desires to have the men restored to her who keep up the amusement. What would be the consequence of such releasing ? We should at once be called upon to set the police to work to catch these play-actors again. Let us once know that American Fenians are not welcomed in Ireland, and then let us talk of an amnesty.

The strength of the appeal made personally to the Prime Minister on behalf of the Fenians in prison has been based on his own interference on behalf of political prisoners in Naples. Mr. Gladstone, in his reply to Mr. Butt, has answered this plea on its merits, and has done so successfully and very easily. It was but the pretence of a plea. Those who made it must have well understood that Mr. Gladstone, when he raised his voice on behalf of Poerio and other Neapolitans, did not intend to preach a doctrine in accordance with which no government would be justified in restraining any political offence, and by which all government would be rendered impossible. It was the pretence of a plea which had in it sufficient semblance of analogy, not to mislead, but to enable men to talk as though they were misled. Mr. Gladstone has answered this plea on its merits, but we may venture to point out the absurdity of appealing from Mr. Gladstone, the critic of a government, to Mr. Gladstone, the governor. Though it should be acknowledged that Mr. Gladstone were wrong in not letting the Fenians loose, he is not to be proved to be wrong because in other, or even in similar circumstances, he himself condemned some other governor. When he raised his voice for the Neapolitans he was a critic on government. Now, in repressing the Fenians, he is a governor,—or one of a set of governors. In each case his conduct must be passed on its then merits ; and any reference from the one to the other must be vain, unprofitable, and unjust.

Mr. Gladstone's previous answer to the "Fenian Memorial," which he addressed to Mr. O'Shea and others, was conclusive. The administration can have no interest in punishment except the interest of duty; and it is for it to consider the time and circumstances of remission, and not to accept from others counsel, the acceptance of which would be tantamount to the abandonment of responsibility. For ourselves, we are sorry that these Fenians should be in prison. Against them, unless as far as they are American,—and, much as we love Americans, we acknowledge that we do not love the American Fenian,—against them, as far as they are Irish, we entertain no strong feeling. But we are strongly convinced that the prison doors must not be further opened till we are aware that Fenianism has sailed back across the Atlantic.

Ireland's great demand at present, though not that in making which her voice is at the present moment the loudest, is for some new law as to the tenure of land. And the demand is one to which Parliament is bound to give attention, and as to which we understand that the Government is now prepared, or is preparing itself, with some comprehensive measure. We fear that the general expectations of the tenants in Ireland will not be satisfied by the bill which Mr. Chichester Fortescue will, we presume, submit to Parliament. The small Irish agriculturist has been taught to expect what he calls "Fixity of Tenure." "Let there be no paltering with the subject. The Irish peasant should have absolute property in his improvement of the land, and fixity of tenure." These words, which we believe were spoken the other day by a candidate for parliamentary honours, fairly express the hopes of the Irish farmer. Rent to be settled by the value of produce, as to the amount of which the landlord shall have no voice, and entire security against eviction on any score but that of non-payment of rent,—which is fixity of tenure,—is, as we saw, demanded by the priests of St. Jarlath's. We see that at various meetings resolutions are proposed and carried which demand that the exigencies of the country shall be met by a Land Bill, based upon the principles of "fixity of tenure." The phrase has become so general throughout Ireland, that every peasant holder of land is conversant with the term. It is known that Mr. John Mill, whose name is supposed to be a guarantee for wisdom, has proposed a sweeping measure of land reform, by which all the duties and privileges of possession shall be taken from the present proprietors and made over in perpetuity to the present tenants, compensation in money being made, by the instrumentality of the Government, to the dispossessed owners. It is generally believed in Ireland, though wrongly believed, that Mr. Bright's scheme would be equally powerful in giving entire control over the land to the tenant. Does any one on this side of the Irish Channel believe that the Government will propose a measure at all akin to that for which demand is thus made?

In regard to fixity of tenure as understood by the Irish tenant, we need only refer to Lord Dufferin's address on Mr. Mill's scheme. Independently of a violation of all rights of property so strong as to make man's common sense rebel against such law-making, such a law would ruin the whole country. Landlords would fly from it. Indeed, landlords, in the sense we give to the words, there would be none. They who at the passing of such a law held tracts of land in their own hands, would never let them, and the present holdings would be divided and subdivided till the country would become a wilderness. Sons would inherit starvation from their fathers, and would be forced to accept the inheritance. Any law really enacting fixity of tenure to the tenant would transfer the property violently from one owner to another, but would transfer it so burdened with charges as to make it valueless to the unfortunate possessor. And yet fixity of tenure is what Ireland is now demanding!

We may presume that the Government will inquire rather what Ireland really wants in reference to land. In the course of the last summer the managers of the "Times" newspaper sent a gentleman to travel through Ireland, and report through its columns to the public what he found to be the present condition of the Irish farmer. His letters have been widely read, and we may presume that the tenor of his remarks is generally known to our readers. He seems to think that things were not nearly as bad as he expected, and that Irish farmers and Irish farm labourers are not now in a state of starvation. We intend to do him justice when we say that his evidence goes to establish the following results,—First, that rents are well paid;—secondly, that wages have risen considerably during the last twenty years;—thirdly, that many farmers have good balances at their bankers;—fourthly, that absenteeism is much to be lamented;—and, fifthly, that the tenant's possession in the property of his holding is very precarious, because, as a rule, he has no lease. Of the entire truth of all this we are confident. We know that rents, which, twenty years ago, were not paid regularly, now are paid. We know that wages have risen within the last quarter of a century more than fifty per cent. We know that within the last thirty years banks have been established in every little town,—one might almost say in every village,—which would not be there unless the people were in a condition to use a bank. We know that the produce of the country has increased almost as greatly as the population has diminished. We know, too, now, as we always did, that absenteeism is a drawback to the welfare of a country, and that a precarious tenure of land is adverse to the employment of capital.

Looking at these reports, and at the facts in reference to the condition of Ireland which are known, we think that there is cause rather for congratulation than for sorrow or condolence. Previous to the famine the condition of Ireland was indeed terrible, and, as far as

man's eye could see it, it was becoming worse and worse from day to day. Wages had not risen for years,—and indeed, as a rule, there were no wages. Every peasant was dependent for his living on his share of some subdivision of a patch of ground. We have known £10 a year paid by the Crown for the full services of a man, and the situation to be greedily sought. The tenants' houses over the greater portion of the land were simply cabins. The two frightful systems of middlemen and conacre-letting were in full force; and a race of men and women were living in the country whose nature we may best describe to our readers by calling them Squires, who were as locusts on the fruits of the land. Then came the famine from God's hand, and the cure of the evil began. When remedies for great evils come after that fashion, they are generally severe in treatment. Only they who lived through the famine in Ireland can know what the country suffered ;—but, as results of that treatment, the country was relieved from a surplus population of more than three million souls, the land was forced out of the hands of pauper landlords and pauper tenants, the locusts perished, and the middlemen vanished from the land.

In all statements as to the condition of Ireland made by inquiring and thoughtful men it has been acknowledged that the condition of the country has been greatly improved since the famine. The truth of this assertion is proved by the increase in the rates of wages and production of the soil, and by the diminution of small holdings. Could England or could Ireland have fairly hoped for a quicker growth of material prosperity? If not, then we say that the circumstances of the case cannot demand any treatment so violent as one that would change altogether the existing nature of things, and create a social revolution. A leap in the dark may be the wisest step to take when to stand is sure destruction; but a leap in the dark from a standing-point of increasing advantage can hardly be wise. The patient submits himself to the surgeon's knife though the surgeon tells him that the knife may bring death, when the belief has reached him that death without the knife is certain; but he will not incur the peril with the hope of cure, when cure is quickly reaching him without the peril. There has undoubtedly been great wrong, but the wrong is in the course of being made right. The people of Ireland have been cruelly ill-used,—chiefly in this, that for three centuries we Englishmen have thought that we could make them change their religion. Consequent upon that injustice there has been continued insult. That injurious idea of a State Conscience in matters of religion, which drove Cromwell to barbarous cruelty, and which has produced more wrong from man to man than any other feeling since human passions first had their sway, has leaned heavily indeed on the weaker island since England seceded from the Church of Rome. That injustice we have seen and acknow-

ledged,—and have remedied as far as it lies in us to give a remedy. There is now no ascendant Church in Ireland ; and if there be any remaining privilege in Ireland open to a Protestant and closed against a Catholic, it is but some small remnant of an abuse that needs only to be pointed at to be removed. The injustice has been ended, and the insult has ceased. But the results of injustice and of insult against a nation cannot be made to vanish in a year, nor in a score of years, nor in half a century. As honour and industry always go together, so do idleness and contempt. The ferment of an oppressed people,—of a people driven into piteous idleness by the contemptuous demeanour of an ascendant sect,—of course remains, and equally of course there will be men to trade upon it. In legislating for Ireland now the legislator of the day must bear this disadvantage as best he may. It cannot be but that he should be subject to absurd demands, that a disruption of the manners and social habits of the country should be asked from him, that he should be threatened with revolution, rebellion, and bloodshed. But the fervour of a people demanding evil things does not unsettle the firm mind of him who is just and strong of purpose. We cannot believe that these wild demands for what is called fixity of tenure in land will induce Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet to initiate a measure the gist of which shall be so to alter the nature of the tenure of land in Ireland as to rob the landlord of the privileges of his position.

We are told, though we know not on what authority or with the support of what arguments, that arrangements as to the tenure of land which suit England are unsuitable for Ireland. We are aware that at present land is held in both islands by a system of occupation between landlord and tenant which does not prevail in the other great countries with which we are best acquainted. In France, land is subdivided under a law which makes primogeniture impossible, and this has already prevailed to such an extent that the holding of land is quite the reverse from what it is in England. In Italy the law is now similar to that in France ;—the same effect has not been produced, the law being recent ; and it may be doubted whether it will be produced, as the feeling of Italians is already acting in opposition to the law ;—but the holding of the land by the occupying tenant is quite different from the system of tenure with us. In the United States, a tenant farmer is rarely to be found ; a man who does not choose to farm his land sells it. We do not intend on this occasion to maintain that the English system is better than the French, the Italian, or the American ; but we do maintain that were either of the four countries suddenly to adopt the system of the other under legislative enactments, trouble, distress, and agricultural ruin would be the result. The habits of a country in matters large as these, become strong with the growth of centuries, and have roots which cannot be moved without destruction. The system of holding land

by a rent payable in money to a real owner of the soil, is, we believe, as old in Ireland as it is in England. It is at least as firmly fixed in one country as in the other. They who speak of fixity of tenure will say that they do not mean to deprive the landlord; but, in so saying, they can hardly have realized what fixity of tenure means. A lease for thirty-one years is not fixity of tenure;—nor would be a lease of sixty-three. Fixity of tenure we take to mean this,—that the law shall regulate the duration of the holding, together with the other terms of the lease, so that the landlord shall have no privilege in, or power over, his land, other than that of receiving a certain annual income, of which the law shall regulate the amount. That is fixity of tenure such as we understand it; and fixity of tenure, so settled by law, would undoubtedly have the effect of destroying what we may call landlordism in Ireland.

The question after all is this;—Are we anxious to put down the system of landlordism? The two grievances of Ireland are now enumerated as absenteeism and precarious tenure of land. The former evil,—that of absenteeism,—cannot be cured by Act of Parliament. It cannot be decreed that an Irish landlord shall live so many months in the year on his own property. But by law we can banish him. We can so deprive him of all relish in his property! of all feeling for the people who till the land which he has called his own! of all the charm of landlordism, as to make the place that has hitherto known him, of all places in the world the most distasteful to him. Fixity of tenure would certainly do this. To complain of absenteeism and to demand fixity of tenure, in one and the same moment, is indeed to blow hot and cold with a vengeance.

We then come to the precarious tenure of land, and have to ask ourselves whether anything can be done by law to lessen this evil, short of that fixity of tenure which we believe to be the greater evil of the two. After all it is that at which legislators have been aiming ever since Mr. Sharman Crawford took up the question of tenant right in Ireland. We do not think that the evil which we all see is to be cured by a law giving the tenant any right in his land other than that which the owner of the land chooses to impart to him. We doubt even whether tenant right in Ulster, working there with a gentleness which would not have belonged to it had it been confirmed by law, has worked for good. The landlord demands his rent for his land, and the incoming tenant pays away, for the privilege of cultivating the land subject to that rent, the very capital which he should expend upon it. The desire of our legislators should be so to regulate the law between landlord and tenant as to make it evidently the landlord's interest to give his tenant a lease if demanded. That tenants are commonly dispossessed in Ireland without recompense is, we maintain, not the fact. In support of this opinion we refer to the letters published in the "Times." Two instances of eviction have been

given, in one of which,—a case which had arisen from a most uncommon mistake made by a landlord as to his own rights,—restitution was made from proper feeling; in the other case, restitution was obtained by law. It is, too, manifestly true that a better class of houses than were ever seen on Irish farms before the famine are now being built by tenants at will, in blind trust on the good-will of present and future landlords. Nevertheless, if a law can be contrived which shall make it to the advantage of landlords to give leases, such law no doubt will be of good effect.

In the Sessions of 1866 and of 1867 bills were brought before Parliament by Mr. Chichester Fortescue and by Lord Naas,—the Irish Secretaries in the liberal and conservative Governments,—the purport of which was to compel landlords to pay tenants for substantial improvements. As is well known, neither of these bills became law. Mr. Fortescue's bill proposed that such claims should be made only for improvements which had received the landlord's sanction, whereas that of Lord Naas allowed the tenant to carry out his improvement, and demand his compensation, even though the landlord had not been a consenting party. It seems to us that the law cannot wisely go further in coercing the landlord than the adoption, at furthest, of the latter of these measures. That such a measure would have the effect of increasing the duration of tenures there can, we think, be no doubt. Few landlords will be anxious to dispossess tenants to whom on their going they must pay a considerable sum of money; and moreover, as tenants with the means of making improvement on their holdings will be encouraged by such law, it is manifest that landlords will be anxious to keep the benefit which has been conferred upon them. It is not to be supposed that an Irish landlord prefers an impoverished tenant and a badly cultivated estate to a solvent farmer and productive farms. Such a law as that of which we speak will not at once cover the face of Ireland with leases. No change so sudden is to be expected,—or desired. But the effect would at once appear in the prolongation of tenures, either with leases or without them.

That such a measure, or that any measure, should make Ireland quiet, shut up the rabidly-rebellious newspapers in Dublin, or put an immediate end to the American trade of Fenianism, no statesman, we presume, expects. One is never entitled to expect that things long rough can be made smooth by a word,—even though that word have the force of law. That some further legislation is required for Ireland,—some legislation that shall touch the relations between landlord and tenant, we are agreed; but we think that justice demands nothing further than that we have indicated, and that expediency would be ill served by any law of greater stringency.

AN AUTUMN IDYLL.

"Sweet Themm's! runne softly, till I end my song;"
SPENSER: *Prothalamion*.

LAWRENCE. FRANK. JACK.

LAWRENCE.

Here, where the beech nuts drop among the grasses,
Push the boat in, and throw the rope ashore.
Jack, hand me out the claret and the glasses;
Here let us sit. We landed here before.

FRANK.

Jack's undecided. Say, formose puer,
Bent in a dream above the "water wan,"
Shall we row higher, for the reeds are fewer,
There by the pollards, where you see the swan?

JACK.

Hist! That's a pike. Look,—nose against the river,
Gaunt as a wolf, with scarce a fin astir.
Enter a gudgeon. Snap,—a gulp, a shiver;—
Exit the gudgeon. Let us anchor here.

FRANK (*in the grass*).

Jove, what a day! Black Care upon the crupper,
Nods at his post, and slumbers in the sun;
Half of Theocritus, with a touch of Tupper,
Churns in my head. The frenzy has begun.

LAWRENCE.

Sing to us then. Dametas singing verses,
Much out of tune, will edify the rooks.

FRANK.

Sing you again. So musical a Thyrsis
Surely will draw the fish upon the hooks.

JACK.

Sing while you may. The beard of manhood still is
Faint on your cheeks, but I, alas, am old.
Doubtless you still believe in Amaryllis ;—
Sing me of Her, whose name may not be told.

FRANK.

Listen, O Thames. His budding beard is riper,
Say—by a week. Well, Lawrence, shall we sing ?

LAWRENCE.

Yes, if you will. But ere I play the piper,
Let him declare the prize he has to bring.

JACK.

Hear then, my shepherds. Lo, to him accounted
First in the song, a Pipe I will impart ;—
This, my Belovèd, marvellously mounted,
Amber and foam, a miracle of art.

LAWRENCE.

Lordly the gift. O Muse of many numbers,
Grant me a soft alliterative song.

FRANK.

Me too, O Muse. And if the umpire slumbers,
Sting him with gnats a summer evening long.

LAWRENCE.

Not in a cot, begarlanded of spiders,
Not where the brook traditionally purls;
No, in the Row, supreme among the riders,
Seek I the gem,—the paragon of girls.

FRANK.

Not in the maze and wilderness of mortar,
Not in the sham and stucco of a square,—
No, on a June-lawn sloping to the water,
Stands she I honour, eminently fair.

LAWRENCE.

Dark-haired is mine, with splendid tresses plaited
Back from the brows, imperially curled ;
Calm as a grand, far-looking Caryatid
Holding a roof that covers in a world.

FRANK.

Dark-haired is mine, with breezy ripples swinging
 Loose as a vine-branch blowing in the morn;
 Eyes like the morning, mouth for ever singing,
 Blithe as a bird, new risen from the corn.

LAWRENCE.

Best is the song with music interwoven :
 Mine's a musician,—quivers to the heart,—
 Throbs to the gathered grieving of Beethoven,
 Sways to the light coqueting of Mozart.

FRANK.

Best ? You should hear mine trilling out a ballad,
 Queen at a pic-nic, leader of the glee,
 Not too divine to toss you up a salad,
 Great in Sir Roger danced among the trees.

LAWRENCE.

Ah, when the thick night flares with dropping torches,
 Ah when the crush-room empties of the swarm,
 Pleasant the hand that, in the gusty porches,
 Light as a snow-flake, settles on your arm.

FRANK.

Better the twilight and the cheery chatting,—
 Better the far, forgotten garden-seat,
 Where one may lie, and watch the fingers tatting,
 Lounging with Bran or Bevis at her feet.

LAWRENCE.

All worship mine. Her purity doth hedge her
 Round with so delicate divinity, that men,
 Stained to the soul with money-bag and ledger,
 Bend to the goddess, manifest again.

FRANK.

None worship mine. But some, I fancy, love her,
 Cynics to boot. I know the children run
 Seeing her come, for nought that I discover,
 Save that she brings the summer and the sun.

LAWRENCE.

Mine is a Lady, beautiful and queenly,
 Crowned with a sweet, continual control,
 Grandly forbearing, lifting life serenely,
 E'en to her own nobility of soul.

FRANK.

Mine is a Woman, kindly beyond measure,
Fearless in praising, faltering in blame ;
Simply devoted to other people's pleasure,
Jack's sister Florence,—now you know her name.

LAWRENCE.

"Jack's sister Florence!" Never, Francis, never.
Jack, do you hear! Why, it was she I meant.
She like the country! Ah, she's far too clever,—

FRANK.

There you are wrong. I know her down in Kent.

LAWRENCE.

You'll get a sunstroke, standing with your head bare.
Sorry to differ. Jack,—the word's with you.

FRANK.

How is it, Umpire? Though the motto's threadbare,
"Cœcum non animum" is, I take it, true.

JACK.

"Souvent Femme varie," as a rule, is truer,
Flattered, I'm sure,—but both of you romance.
Happy to further suit of either wooer,
Merely observing—you haven't got a chance.

LAWRENCE.

Yes. But the pipe—

FRANK.

The pipe is what we care for,—

JACK.

Well, in this case, I scarcely need explain,
Judgment of mine were indiscreet, and therefore,—
Peace to you both. The Pipe I shall retain.

A. D.

THE THAMES.

THE majority of writers who have contributed to the literature of rivers have dwelt with greater force on the history which the rivers have seen than on the history of the rivers themselves. Their thoughts have been diverted by an apparently irresistible fascination from a contemplation of the stream slowly rippling past their feet, to a consideration of the busy scenes which age after age has witnessed on its banks, and, hardly conscious of the digression themselves, they have passed from a study of the work of God to muse on the work of man. That they should have done so is perhaps only natural, for we men are apt to consider the works of God as gifts simply placed at our disposal for our own profit. Nor, indeed, has the result of the labours of these writers been devoid of interest; for there is no charm in locality so great as the charm of association. Nature's choicest beauties are most grateful to our senses when they are associated with some memory of a by-gone age. Who would linger now over the green slopes of Runnymead, if those green slopes were not indissolubly connected with a great scene in England's history? But though it may be a very profitable and a very pleasant matter to linger on a spot where a great scene in the world's history has been played out, or to loiter on a bank hallowed by some pleasant memory, there is another history in a great river which ought not to be forgotten. "Rivers and the inhabitants of the watery element,"—to quote the saying which Walton ascribes to "an ingenious Spaniard,"—"were made for wise men to contemplate, and fools to pass by without consideration."

Few people in the present day have meditated on the advantages of a great river. Yet there is no country in the world where those advantages are so conspicuous as our own; and of all the rivers in England the Thames is the clearest instance of the force of this allegation. It is not too much to say that every town and every hamlet on its banks owes its existence to "Father" Thames.

In very early days, when the only roads in the country were grass-grown tracks, so difficult and so dangerous that the best horses could only draw the lightest of the cumbrous vehicles of the period over them at the rate of three or four miles an hour, rivers afforded the easiest and safest means of communication through a country. A great river was a great road, its tributary streams were by-lanes, opening up remote districts, which, but for them, would have been inaccessible. Hence the vast importance of the Thames. Flowing

through what was then the richest portion of England, it drained an area of almost one-tenth, and, if the Medway be included, of more than one-tenth of the whole of England and Wales. On the north, Gloucestershire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Middlesex, Hertfordshire, and Essex; on the south, Wiltshire, Berkshire, Surrey, and Kent were by its aid placed in direct communication with the sea; and those counties thus reaped the advantages of a safe and ready communication which a later age was to shower over the whole land. Two observations will show the force of these reflections. Each of the three great towns of England,—London, Bristol, and York,—commanded one of the three great watersheds of the country. London, at a convenient distance from the mouth of the Thames, directly owed its origin to the river; “*Civitatis fundationis, edificationis et constructionis causa erat Thamesis.*” York, similarly situated on the Ouse, the natural outlet of Yorkshire, was also placed by the aid of the Trent in direct communication with the great midland counties. Bristol, on the Avon, had the Severn at her feet. But though Bristol and York consequently occupied situations of great advantage, these situations were incomparably inferior to that of the rival city, London. Three reasons, two connected directly with the Thames, made the advantages of London infinitely greater than those of the other cities. The commerce of England was necessarily with Europe, and the position of London offers peculiar facilities for communication with Europe; the comparatively flat country through which the course of the Thames lies, made the inland navigation of the river incomparably easier than that of the tributaries of the Ouse, or of the tributaries of the Severn; and the very slight fall in the Thames from Teddington to the sea gave a regularity to the ebb and flow of the tide in the estuary, which greatly facilitated the navigation.

The consideration will be more apparent when it is remembered that, according to Camden, the Thames has a longer estuary than any other river in Europe; the estuary of the river has extended from time immemorial to Teddington—Tide-end Town. The Thames, moreover, has the double advantage of a long estuary, and a regular tidal flow, as the old poet put it:—

“With such true tides no river can be found
In all the realms that Europe's empire bound.”

Pope clearly appreciated the importance of the tide, when he wrote the lines which are worth quoting for their marvellous fulfilment:—

“The time shall come when, free as seas or wind,
Unbounded Thames shall flow for all mankind;
Whole nations enter with each swelling tide,
And seas but join the regions they divide.”

The very existence of London, its power and its trade, are all then directly due to the Thames. But the importance of the river

may still more strikingly be shown by the reflection that, since the navigable use of rivers practically ceased, the valley of the Thames has not grown in wealth so rapidly as the rest of the country. The moment that other and better means of communication were discovered than those which rivers afforded, remote districts were able successfully to compete with our riverside towns. It is true that, in a certain sense, the river still afforded, in some instances, the best means of communication from place to place. In mountainous countries, the canal, the road, and the railway were almost compelled to follow the course of the stream,—the cutting which nature had made for them. The Victor Emanuel line winds its way along the banks of the Rhone; the Hexham and Carlisle along the banks of the Tyne; the Mid-Wales along the valley of the Wye; but the comparatively flat valley of the Thames imposed no such necessities on Brunel; and, if he followed the course of the river at all, he only followed it because nature had attracted thither the population on which he relied to feed his traffic. It is probably from this circumstance that no new town has sprung up on the banks of the Thames. The population has increased, but the centres of population are the same. Run down the list of places on the banks of the Thames; their antiquity is apparent from their very names. If Camden or Stow had lived in the nineteenth century, they could hardly have added another name to the categories they insert:—

“Tot campos, sylvas, tot regia tecta, tot hortos
Artifici dextis excultos: tot vidimus arces
Ut nunc Ausonio Tamesis cum Tybride certet.”

But of all the towns which owed their existence to the Thames, London, from the very earliest days, was the most important. The Thames benefited London in two ways: it was the main street of the town; it was the great highway which connected the town with the country. The first of these functions must be so familiar to the most superficial of readers that it cannot be necessary to refer to more than one or two passages to illustrate it. There is a chapter in Scott which must be familiar to nearly everyone,—the chapter in which he introduces Sir Walter Raleigh to Queen Elizabeth,—which deserves to be quoted, because it not only places the Thames before us in this capacity, as the main street of the town, but because it contains perhaps the highest praise of the river which can be found in our language. “There are two things,” Scott makes Raleigh say to Blount, “scarce matched in the universe; the sun in heaven, and the Thames on the earth.” “The one,” replies Blount, “will light us to Greenwich well enough; and the other would take us there a little faster if it were ebb tide.” “And this,” Raleigh indignantly answers, “is all thou think’st, all thou care’st, all thou deem’st the use of the King of Elements and the King of Rivers, to guide three such poor caitiffs as thyself and me and Tracy upon an idle journey of

courtly ceremony." After this quotation it can hardly be necessary to refer to Scott's graceful picture of Elizabeth, echoing the line which Raleigh had quoted, "in maiden meditation fancy free," and dropping into the Thames the supplication of Orson Pinnit, keeper of the royal bears, "to find more favourable acceptance at Sheerness or wherever the tide might waft it to."

The picture which Scott has placed before us is a peculiarly faithful picture of the Thames as the main street of the town. Knight, in his interesting book on London, introduces us to "the silent highway," and gives numerous illustrations of the use of the river as a street, which it is unnecessary to quote. Stow tells us that, in his time, there were 2,000 wherries, employing 3,000 men, plying on the river at London. The name of at least one man among the wherrymen has survived till the present day. John Taylor, the wherryman poet, seems to have relied at least as much on his wherry as on his pen for his livelihood, for he says of the Thames,—

"Thou, in the morning if my coin be scant,
Before the evening dost supply my want;"

and bitterly complains towards the close of his life of the introduction of coaches, which interfered with the profits of the poor wherryman.

But there is still more striking evidence that the wherryman had a good time of it. For Mary, the ferryman's daughter, founded, out of the profits of a ferry, the Religious House of St. Mary Overy. This house derived its name from its situation, 'over rhe,' or 'over the river';—or 'o' very,' or 'over the ferry,' for this interpretation of the word has also been suggested.

It was probably mainly due to the ferries that the south side of the Thames soon acquired importance, though there was a bridge over the river from the very earliest times. Dion Cassius mentions a bridge over the Thames in A.D. 44, but it is not quite certain whether Dion Cassius is accurate in this respect. The first stone bridge across the Thames was completed in the beginning of the thirteenth century, and this bridge,—Peter of Colechurch's work,—practically stood till it was removed almost in our own time, to make way for Rennie's structure. But whether it was due to the bridge or to the ferries, London south of the Thames, or, to use Camden's words, "that most famous market-town in the county called now the Borough of Southworke, from its south situation opposite to London," soon became populous. So far from separating the two rising cities, the Thames,—the main street of the town,—actually united them.

But the second use of the Thames to London, as the great connecting link between London and the southern counties of England must not be lost sight of. There is abundant evidence that the citizens were keenly alive to the advantages which the river conferred in this way on the city. Charter after Charter, and Act after

Act, not only commit the custody of a great part of the river to the city, but empower the city to remove weirs and other obstructions to the navigation of the river. "For the wele of our soule,"—so runs a charter of King Henry III.—"and the helthe of the soule of Kynge Johan our fader, and the soules of our antecessours, and also for the common profyt of our cite of London and of al our realme; we have graunted and stedfastly commanded, that all the weirs that ben in Thamys be done away." It is reasonable to suppose that "our cite of London" was a great deal more interested in its own "profyt" than in "the wele of our soule" or the souls of the former kings of England.

The enactment itself may appear curious to a modern Londoner who probably has always regarded weirs, in connection with locks, as an ingenious invention for facilitating navigation. But in the days of Henry III., locks were very different things to what they are now. Considering the comparative simplicity of the invention, and the very early days in which water-carriage, and even canals, were introduced, it is curious to find how much time elapsed before locks, in the modern sense of the term, were invented. It has been sometimes thought that the modern system of raising or lowering vessels to different levels by the action of water was first suggested by Leonardo da Vinci; but whether the invention be due or no to Da Vinci, the greatest of the Pre-Raphaelite masters, it is tolerably certain that it was first discovered in Leonardo da Vinci's lifetime, and in his own country. Many centuries elapsed before it was introduced into western Europe; and, till locks were introduced, the difficulties of up-stream navigation were overcome by gradients at the weirs, up which gradients the barges were laboriously drawn. It was, therefore, little to be wondered at that barge-owners in those days should have had a holy horror of weirs; and that the city, in its care for the navigation of the Thames, should have strenuously resisted their multiplication. But, notwithstanding the efforts of the city, the weirs increased in number. In 1578 or 1579 a certain John Bishop complained that there were twenty-three locks, sixteen mills, sixteen floodgates, and seven weirs on the river between Maidenhead and Oxford; and in 1584 or 1585 it appears, from a complaint made by the same John Bishop, that there were no less than seventy locks or weirs, "thirty more than six years before." The complaint itself affords a curious picture of the age. The increase in the traffic had, under the wise rule of Elizabeth, outstripped the increase in the number of the locks. There had been only twelve barges in 1578, but there were eighty in 1584. The barges had not only increased in number, but they had also increased in size; and cables had consequently been frequently broken in going up the locks. Marlow Lock seems to have been a particular offender. It had "such a dismal fall," that four men had lost their lives within a short space of time. Three of these poor fellows were drowned, and the fourth,

who seems to have lost his balance while going down the lock, "had his brains dashed out." This poor fellow seems to have excited John Bishop's especial pity. He had left a widow behind him, and all the compensation the widow received from the lock-keeper—a man named Farmour—for her husband's death was a paltry sum of five shillings. But the locks had something to say for themselves. Locks had existed from time immemorial, and it was necessary that they should exist. How could people get their corn ground if there were no mills? and, if there were mills, there must be locks. It was not true that the locks were steeper; the barges were larger and heavier, and their weight and size had led to the accidents which had occurred. Besides, only a few years before the bargee, when he came to a lock, had always been accustomed to unload his barge, and reload it on the up-stream side. But the barge-owners now were so greedy of gain that they would no longer take the trouble to unload in going up the locks. So far as the old enactments were concerned, from Magna Charta to the Act of Ed. IV., they referred to navigable rivers; and "there was no common passage of barges as far as Marlow."

So ran the defence. Stow does not tell us how the case terminated, but the whole passage, with its quaint account of the difficulties and delays of navigation in the sixteenth century, is one of the most curious in the literature of the Thames. It is probably the only passage in the language where the Thames at Marlow is described as a non-navigable river. All the best authorities have described the river as navigable as far as Cricklade; and the Rivers Commissioners say of it, "The main stream of the river is said to have been navigable time out of mind. It has been described as a common highway." But the passage is also curious, because it helps to throw light on another point which has been warmly contested in our own time—the applicability of the Act of Edward IV. to non-navigable rivers. It seems tolerably clear that in 1586 it was generally admitted that this Act was not applicable to rivers in which there was "no common passage of barges."

If the old statutes were applicable to all rivers, little attention seems to have been paid to them. Weirs seem to have been erected by the riparian owners for fishing or milling purposes wherever they chose; and though their owners were forced to open them whenever boats wished to pass, they were at liberty, in return for their trouble, to exact a small toll for doing so. These weirs, or Rymer locks, as they were called, continued till 1761, when Parliament authorised the construction by the Navigation Commissioners of the more modern pound-locks. But the riparian owners were not deprived of the revenue they had made by muleting the boats in their passage. A double set of tolls was introduced,—one of them payable, and properly payable, to the Commissioners; the other,—so tolerant of abuses were our forefathers,—to the old lock-owners.

But with all these contrivances, navigation was a difficult matter. Whether it was that the barges increased in size and draught, or that the channel was neglected, and silted up, it is certain that barges often stuck fast on the shallows. This hindrance to navigation led to a very curious remedy known by the name of a "flash,"—a remedy which is at least as old as the reign of Queen Elizabeth. When a barge stuck fast, the bargee went to the owner of the weir above, and paid him to "open" his weir. The opening the weir caused, of course, an artificial flood or flash, and so floated the barge off the shallow on which it had grounded. The device did not of course assist the navigation of the river in general, but only the particular barge which paid for the flash; and was a very clumsy way of effecting the object in view. It cannot, then, be a matter of much surprise that the invention of pound-locks should have led to a still greater change—the construction of canals. The moment that the question of levels was finally overcome, it became clear that it was desirable that the traffic, instead of following the circuitous course of the stream, should take the shorter and straighter course which was possible for a canal. Nor was it only directness of route that a canal insured. A canal was protected from floods,—a great advantage to the navigator, and offered under all circumstances and at all times a sufficiently deep channel for the passage of boats. The first use of rivers was over; a new one had been invented still connected with navigation, and it was this which Brindley expressed so epigrammatically when he said that "rivers were made to feed navigable canals."

The consequence of this state of things became very soon apparent. The advantages of water communication were no longer confined to the places which were situated on navigable rivers. There was no place to which it was impossible to lead a canal, no place, therefore, which was necessarily deprived of the advantages of water communication. It no longer became indispensable that a town should be situated on a navigable river, since if nature had not given it a water-way, the water-way could be brought to it by man. Later on a greater man than even Brindley was to introduce a still greater change. The railway was to supersede the canal just as the canal had already in a great measure superseded the river, and then the main use which was to be left to our rivers was the use which was hardly foreseen in the distant times we have been considering—the supply of water to the great centres of population.

Few towns were originally better supplied with water than London. Six centuries ago the town was intersected with considerable streams, some of which exist still, and assist to flush our sewers; while the memory of others is only preserved in the names of streets which faintly remind us of them. Dr. Buckland long ago pointed out in his famous "Bridgwater Treatise" that London was the centre of a vast geological formation, extending from Sevenoaks in Kent to

Leighton Buzzard in Bedfordshire, and that the rainfall, collected in those parts of this district which were not covered by the London clay, lodged in the chalk and firestone, and, upheld by clay of the gault formation, would have a natural tendency to rise to the surface, and does rise to the surface, when artesian wells are bored through the London clay in London. Surface drainage has in some measure altered this state of things. Even if the lower strata be still richly charged with water, the innumerable springs in the superficial beds upheld by the London clay itself have long since become more or less exhausted ; and, in consequence of surface drainage, are no longer constantly replenished as they used to be. Three hundred years ago the state of things was very different, their superficial beds were richly charged with water, and tributary after tributary rose in consequence in the immediate neighbourhood of London, and flowed into the Thames. Of these tributaries the River of Wells, or Turnemil Brook, as it was subsequently called, was the most important. It was not only a considerable stream of itself, but it was swelled in its turn by two considerable brooks,—Old Bourne, “a great water in the west suburbs,” whose name still survives in Holborn ; and the “Flete” or Swift Brook—a brook which subsequently degenerated into a ditch.* Centuries ago the River of Wells suffered bad treatment. “In a fair book of Parliament records,” says Stow, “it appeareth that a Parliament being holden at Carlisle in the year 1307, Henry Lacy, Earl of Lincoln, complained that whereas, in times past, the course of water running at London under Old Borne Bridge and Fleet Bridge into the Thames had been of such breadth and depth that ten or twelve ships, navies at once, with merchandise, were wont to come by the aforesaid Bridge of Fleet, and some of them unto Old Borne Bridge ; now the same course, by filth of the tanners and such other, was sore decayed, also by raising of wharves, but especially by a diversion of the water made by them of the New Temple for their mills.” Henry Lacy’s petition,—perhaps the earliest petition in England against river pollution,—was attended with some results. The River of Wells was cleaned and dredged ; the mills were removed ; but the river was never so large again, and in consequence it suffered a severe loss,—the loss of its “good name ;”—before it had been a river ; it became henceforward known as a brook.

Nearly 200 years later, in 1502, it was cleaned again, and nearly ninety years afterwards, in 1589, another attempt of a more ambitious nature was made to clean it. It seems then to have been supposed that by drawing some springs into it near its source at Highgate, its volume might be increased ; but the attempt failed ; the increase of population played its part, and the river became more foul than ever.

Wall Brook, another important tributary, which derived its name from the wall of the town, but which in the days of the Conqueror

* “The King of Dykes.”—POPE.

was known as "Running Water," was in comparatively early days "vaulted over with brick and made level with the street and lane, so that the course of Wall Brook is now hid under the ground." This brook is supposed by some persons to have given a name, Ludgate, to one of the gates of the town. If this derivation be correct, Ludgate would be Fludgate, or Floodgate, the gate by the river, just as the Porta Fluentina at Rome is the gate near the Tiber.

Lang Borne was the third of the great brooks which flowed through the old city. It was a great stream of water which sprang from the ground in Fen Church Street. What a lesson there is in the name when it is properly written! but like Wall Brook, Lang Borne was soon walled over, and its existence almost forgotten.

Thus the streams which in the old days supplied London with water one by one failed; and the water question in its modern aspect arose. The citizens were forced to seek "sweet water from abroad." "Abroad," it must be confessed, bore a very different meaning then from what it does now. Tye Bourn,—a brook which will probably be forgotten, when the memory of Wallbrook, Holborn, and the Fleet still survives,—was the distant source from which water was taken. The pleasant fields through which the Bourn flowed afforded an ample supply of water to the London of Henry III.

But as London still grew the supply from Tye Bourn proved insufficient, and the good folk of the city were forced to seek for water from other sources. Sir Hugh Myddelton undertook, in Queen Elizabeth's time, the great work,—which has immortalized him,—of leading the New River to London. The little tributaries in the immediate neighbourhood of London were exhausted. Another and a more distant tributary, "the Gulphy Lee," as Pope calls it, was chosen. But Lea waters were not then, and, "pace" the New River Company, are not now, particularly clear. Thames water even in London was at the end of the sixteenth century absolutely clearer than the New River water, and Thames water was for the first time used for the supply of London. One Peter Morris, a Dutchman, who has been forgotten because his work has proved less enduring than Sir Hugh's, drew water from the Thames by a water-wheel working under one of the arches of London Bridge, and we are told that "the water did sooner become clearer than the New River water. This Morris was the first person who raised water to a height in England. He threw it, in the presence of the Lord Mayor, over the steeple of St. Magnus' Church. It seems that he performed the feat to some purpose, for the city granted him a second arch of the bridge for his wheel, and a 500 years' lease. Morris's descendants sold the lease in 1701 to one Soans for £38,000, but large as the price seems Soans's bargain was a good one, for, after prevailing on the city to grant him another arch of the bridge, he divided the undertaking into 500 shares of £300 each, and "it hath a good prospect of turning to account

and to gain upon the New River, having some advantage of that water."

It is curious to read of Thames water having advantages over Lea water, but the water of the Thaines was, even in London, exceptionally clear. Dryden talks of "the silver Thames," and, to show that he is writing of the Thames at London, adds, "her,—London's,—own domestic flood." Gray used the same epithet, "his silver winding way." And Stow tells us that, "after a great flood you may take up haddocks with your hand, beneath the bridge, as they float aloft on the water, whose eyes are so blinded with the thickness of the water . . . otherwise the water of itself was very clear." The Pollution Commissioners, writing in 1866, add their testimony to the natural purity of Thames water. "The special conditions in the geology," they observe, "and surface configuration of the basin, render the water singularly pure for so large a river. The water, as it flows gently down, has also the power of becoming oxidized and purified to a considerable degree."

The thickness of the water in flood time was, however, due to the same cause as its normal purity,—the geological formation of the Thames basin. The chalk that gave Marlow its name from "marle," or the Chiltern hills their name from the old English word, "cylt," chalk, and which in a measure prompted Pope's line, "The chalky Wey that rolls a milky flood," was unquestionably in suspension in the water which blinded the haddocks below London Bridge. But the accidental mention of these haddocks is surely a curious testimony to the normal purity of the water. With the haddocks another and a more valuable fish,—salmon,—has disappeared from the Thames. The salmon of the Thames will deserve a more particular account farther on ; they must give way to the consideration of the great water question for the moment. Morris's example of pumping water from the Thames was soon followed. In 1594, water-works on his principle were erected at Broken Wharf, for the supply of West Cheap. Peter Morris's wheels remained under London Bridge till the bridge,—the same bridge, by-the-bye, which Peter of Colechurch had founded more than six centuries before,—was taken down in 1822. But the increase of pollution,—a very different kind of pollution to the milky water which had blinded the haddocks,—compelled the abandonment of the Thames at London as a source of water supply. London is at present mainly supplied with water from the Thames at Hampton, and the five great companies undertaking the supply are authorised to take from it 100,000,000 gallons of water a day. It is true that, practically, these companies do not take from it much more than half of this quantity of water ; but, as the population goes on increasing, and as the demand for water consequently increases, the water which these companies abstract must more and more nearly approach the maximum which they are authorised to take. But this maximum,

which is certainly not more than equal to the supply of 3,000,000 persons, is one-third the minimum flow of the river; and it consequently follows that if the Thames is to be preserved as a navigable river, the time must come when it will be necessary for London to take some steps to supplement her present water supply. A question so deeply affecting the Thames deserves some notice in this article; and it may therefore be useful to point out that two solutions, for each of which it is possible to say a good deal, have been offered of the problem. The first of these solutions contemplates the great centres of population going to some natural reservoir, with which they have no physical connection, for their water supply. The second of these solutions insists that each river valley should supply itself with water. The advocates of the first system rely on the fact that the population in the valley of the Thames is increasing, while the water of the Thames can never be increased. That the water above Hampton, from which the supply is at present drawn, is polluted with the sewage of 900,000 persons; and that it has been proved, on uncontested medical evidence, that if the river be polluted with sewage at Oxford, the process of oxidation which the water more or less undergoes, is no guarantee for its arriving at Hampton free from injurious sewage taint; that even naturally Thames water contains so much carbonate of lime,—in other words, so much soap-destroying matter,—that it is peculiarly unfitted for domestic uses; that, on the other hand, an unlimited supply of water could be drawn from the lakes of Cumberland or the hills of Wales, free from all impurities; and that the cost of bringing this water to London would in reality be repaid by the greater suitability of the water for domestic uses.

But the advocates of the second system reply, and reply with great justice, that though the dry-weather flow of the Thames is barely sufficient, and may soon be insufficient for the supply of the metropolis with water, the flood flow of the river is so great that, if it were only properly husbanded, it would be amply sufficient to meet any demand for water which it is possible to foresee. They argue that the flood-flow of the river is many times as great as the dry-weather flow; and that there are places where gigantic reservoirs could be easily constructed in which this flood-water could be stored; that its storage would be an advantage to the land on the river, as it would mitigate the violence of floods, which are, at present, productive of considerable damage and loss to life and property; that the flow of sewage into the river is an evil susceptible of remedy, and which ought to be remedied, and which cannot consequently be quoted as a permanent obstacle to the use of Thames water; and, finally, that, as nature has placed a supply of water at our own doors, it is absurd to seek for water, at a vast expense, from a distant district.

One circumstance connected with the question of water supply remains to be stated. The geological conditions of the Thames

valley are peculiarly favourable to the retention of a vast supply of water, and, for this reason, the Thames does not rise and fall so rapidly as other rivers. The vast extent of the Thames basin of course receives a large rain-fall, and the flatness of its surface prevents it running off so rapidly as it would in a more precipitous valley. The water slowly oozes through the ground till it reaches the Thames, instead of running off immediately in the innumerable channels, which always result from a heavy shower in mountainous countries. Land drainage has, it is true, in some measure affected this condition of things, since it has led to the construction of innumerable tiny torrents for carrying off the flood water. But a vast extent of the Thames basin is not, and never will be, subjected to land drainage; and therefore land drainage has not so much effect in the valley of the Thames as it has in other parts of the country. Sewage is, of course, the main cause which has forced on the water question, and the history of sewage is intimately connected with the history of the Thames. The history of sewage, in the modern sense of the term, is a very recent one. Its novelty is perceptible in its very name. Johnson never mentions the word at all; and though he gives an example of the word "sewer," in which Milton uses it in its modern sense, the derivation that he assigns to it "issue, issuer," proves that he regarded it as synonymous to drain. Within the memory of the present generation many of the largest towns were not sewered at all, but the old system of cess-pits was still in force. Into the evils of the cess-pit system it would be irrelevant to enter in this article, but it is not irrelevant to point out that in getting rid of one evil we have exchanged it for another. We abolished the cess-pits, and polluted our streams. A new use was invented for navigable rivers. They were the natural sewers of the country. How the Thames has suffered from the adoption of this maxim the youngest of us can remember. Nearly 10,000,000 cubic feet, or 65,000,000 gallons of sewage diluted with water were passed into the Thames every day. The evil, which was of course increasing with the growth of the population, culminated in the hot summer of 1855. Something like a panic arose at the state of the river. Instant measures were demanded to cleanse the filthy, polluted stream which was threatening us with disease, and the great work of intercepting the sewage was commenced. But, though Londoners were tolerably thoughtful for themselves, they had little thought for the noble river to which they owed their city. They removed the evil from their own doors, but they reproduced it at Crossness. There, in consequence of the sewage which is being pumped daily into the river, and which is carried backwards and forwards with the ebbing and the flowing tide; the whole bed of the river is silting up, and the navigation is seriously imperilled. The river is being destroyed by the city which owed its origin to the river.

Whether it be sewage which has driven the salmon from the Thames it is difficult to say. It certainly must be sewage which has kept away the haddocks, since there is no other impediment to drive them out of the river. A few smelts were indeed last year caught at Kew, and these fish must consequently have run through the comparatively cleaner water. The history of the salmon fisheries of the Thames would form a subject for a long essay. They furnished one of the points of contention between King John and the barons, which Magna Charta had to settle. Mr. Hepworth Dixon has told us that "one of the chief points which King John had been forced to surrender to his people was a claim on the part of his Tower-warden to catch fish improperly by placing kidels in the stream. For three or four years the great kidel question was our chief domestic topic; agitating Essex, Kent, and Middlesex, especially the river-side taverns; leading to endless orders in council, and many disorders in the streets. The king's people not only set up their own kidels in the Thames, but sold their rights of dishonest fishing to others, so as to interfere with the legitimate trade, to destroy the salmon and shad, and to diminish the poorer people's food. Lionheart tried to settle the kidel dispute. In the eighth year of his reign, being pressed by his barons, he made a merit of giving up his right of kidelling the Thames, enacting, as the grant expresses it, that for the salvation of his soul, for the salvation of his father's soul, for the salvation of the souls of all his ancestors, as well as for the good of his realm, there shall be no more kidels." But the royal word was not kept: and so in the Great Charter the barons insisted on inserting the famous clause, "Omnis kidelli deponantur de cetero penitus per Tamisiam et Medwayam et per totam Angliam, nisi per costeram maris," words which cannot be more forcibly rendered than in Mr. Dixon's language, "there shall be no more kidels."

Stow gives us in a passage, which is worth quoting, a list of the fish of the Thames. "Why should I speak," he writes, "of the fat and sweet salmons daily taken in this stream, and that in such plenty,—after the time of the smelt is past,—as no river in Europe is able to exceed it? But what store also of barbels, trouts, chevins, pearches, smelts, breams, roches, daces, gudgeons, flounders, shrimps, eels, &c." Pope, in six lines, gives us a somewhat different category:—

"Our plenteous streams a various race supply:
The bright-eyed perch, with fins of Tyrian dye;
The silver eel, in shining volumes rolled;
The yellow carp, in scales be-dropped with gold;
Swift trout, diversified with crimson stains;
And pikes, the tyrants of the watery plains."

In this brief notice of the Thames, the history of the river has alone been traced, and the history of its banks has been purposely disregarded. The history of its banks would have proved the truth of the allegation, which has been already made, that the towns on the

stream owe their existence to the river. It is true that the river has not been equally lavish of its advantages to every place. In conferring favours on some places, it has naturally detracted from the advantages of others. Two places, now only known as little villages, were originally the seats of a Bishop's see. Sonning, with its 465 inhabitants, was formerly the seat of the Bishopric which has since been transferred to Salisbury. Lincoln is the present seat of the Bishop whose predecessors presided over their diocese at Dorchester. This Dorchester, now only a village with 925 inhabitants, began to decline in early days, and to give place to a rival city, Abingdon. Stow tells us that Abingdon, or Abbeytown, owes its prosperity to the industry of some pious monks, who turned the course of the river through the town. But Camden offers a more probable explanation of its prosperity when he says, that it was owing to the construction of a bridge which turned the great highway to the west through the city. Maidenhead, or South Ealington, as it was originally called, but which owes its modern name to the veneration of I know not what British virgin, one of the 11,000 who, returning home with Ursula from Rome, were martyred at Cologne by Attila, "that scourge of God," also owes its prosperity to a bridge. "After a wooden bridge was constructed here, it began to have several inns, and to outvie its neighbour and mother town, Bray." Four places at least, Windsor, Hampton, Richmond, and Hanworth, owe their connection with royalty to the river. The first was given by Edward the Confessor to the Abbey of Westminster, but "by the constitution and favour of the venerable Abbot, the Conqueror agreed for Windlesora for the king's use, the place appearing proper and convenient for a Royal Residence on account of the river, and its nearness to the forest for hunting, and many other conveniences." Richmond, which was originally called Shene, from the splendour of the Royal Palace there, owes its modern name to Henry VII., the Richmond of Bosworth Field, by whom the palace, after it had been burnt down, was rebuilt. Its nearness to the river was the chief reason which induced Wolsey to select Hampton as the site of his regal palace; and probably a similar reason induced Richard, king of the Romans, to fix on Isleworth, or Gistleworth, as it was then called, for his abode. But though the history of the banks of the river is full of interest, it is absolutely impossible to notice it in an article which has already outrun its legitimate length; and so this short account of the Thames must close; and perhaps it is impossible to close it more aptly than in Denham's words:—

"Oh could I flow like thee, and make thy stream
My great example, as it is my theme!
Tho' deep, yet clear; tho' gentle, yet not dull;
Strong, without rage; without o'erflowing, full."

ASSAMMARCO !

ABOUT three hundred and seventy years ago,—1498,—the strange-looking word prefixed to this paper was very frequently heard in the streets of Florence. And during the last few months the same cry has been in many mouths. The word in the Florentine cockney dialect means “To St. Mark’s!” and in old books of the time, when every Florentine man and woman spoke exactly as the lower populace speaks now, the word is found printed as it is above written. It was the shout of a furious populace in 1498, as they rushed to the old Dominican convent of St. Mark’s, bent on dragging from its walls the Prior Girolamo Savanorola, in order to do him to death. In 1869 the cry has mainly been heard in the mouths of the lovers of art and of the cab-drivers responding to the frequent orders of strangers and visitors of all sorts.

But the old convent, with its memories and its art-treasures, has been there all the time, dozing away on the sunny side of the square which bears its name; and the black and white Dominicans have been all these intervening years to be seen basking in the sun at their convent door, or pacing their larger or their smaller cloister, or occasionally sauntering through the streets of Florence. Why, therefore, should the old cry of “Assammarco!” have been heard again, especially during the last past few months?

For two reasons.

In the first place, because not only the prior, but he and all his flock have recently been harried forth from their immemorial quarters. And as a consequence of this, the sex, which has during all these years been forbidden by claustral rules to penetrate within the walls of the convent, has now, for the first time, been able to gratify its curiosity by visiting every part of the building; and, in the second place, because the same ejection of the old tenants of the historic walls has brought to light many heretofore unknown or unobserved treasures of art, and has encouraged the Italian Government to render these, as well as such as were previously known to exist, more pleasantly accessible and more available to art-students.

Therefore “all the world” has once again been crying “Assammarco!”

And the world was well justified in its curiosity.

The first care of the new masters of the convent was to cleanse it thoroughly. This has been done very efficiently. The whole of the

cells, passages, cloisters, refectories, chapter-house, &c., &c., have been swept and garnished in such sort that it may well be supposed that never since the day when Cosmo, "pater patriæ," completed the building until now has the convent been so entirely clean. The odour of sanctity has altogether departed from it; and a slight odour of whitewash in certain parts of the building will by no means be mistaken for the former by any olfactories which have ever had experience of the real thing.

Then, when this had been done, when nothing remained within the walls save the priceless paintings on them, it became a question what should be done with the vast building? It has been proposed to convert it into a national picture-gallery and art-museum, to concentrate there all the treasures now housed in the galleries of the Uffizi, the vast picture-gallery of the Pitti,—the suite of rooms occupied by which the Court would be very glad to be able to use for other purposes,—the gallery of the Academia delle Belle Arti, and some other public art-property. It is asserted that there is space in the convent to house all the enormous collection that would thus be brought together well and judiciously. It seems somewhat difficult to believe that such should be the case, vast as the buildings of the old Dominican convent are. But the assertion is made by persons who should be well-informed on such a subject.

No such plan, however, has as yet been adopted by the Government. The present notion is to make of St. Mark's a special museum of Dominican art. No one of the monastic orders has numbered so many artists in its ranks as the sons of St. Dominic. Both "Beato Angelico" and "Fra Bartolomeo" were, as is well known, monks in this convent; and the most important works of the former are still to be found in the frescoes with which he adorned its walls; and these circumstances seem to give an appearance of special propriety to the idea. But it is very difficult to imagine that all that can be gathered as memorials of Dominican art can need, or in any way occupy, the immense space at command.

A few paintings by Fra Bartolomeo have been already transported thither; but the real attraction, which has been drawing the visitors in crowds all the past winter "*Assammarco*," is the wonderful series of frescoes on the walls of the convent by the matchless hand of *Fra Angelico*.

Those and the strange memories connected with the place!

Very strange and suggestive it is to walk through those utterly empty cells and corridors! The smaller and the larger cloister are connected by a passage, from which opens a stair leading to the cells above the former. They occupy three sides of the quadrangle; on the fourth is the southern wall of the nave of the church. The stair opens on the eastern corridor; and immediately facing the head of it, on the wall of the opposite cell, the visitor sees the first of the

traces of the presence here of Beato Angelico, in a very charming painting of the Annunciation.

"*Virginis intactæ cum veneris ante figuram,
Prætereundo cave ne sileatur Ave!*"

is inscribed in ancient Gothic letters beneath the picture, with more of piety than prosody. Every monk of those who lodged in the cells above the western cloister must needs pass by that spot every time he betook himself to the church, or the refectory, or the library. If few "Aves" are said by those who now climb that stair, there is little danger that the stranger should pass the spot unheedingly, for this representation of the Annunciation is as exquisite a specimen of his special excellence as any which "Il Beato" has left in the convent.

The special excellence of this Dominican friar was indeed the special excellence of all the greater artists among his contemporaries, and of the painters before the time of Raffaello generally. This excellence may be very briefly described as the power of speaking most impressively to the intelligence and the emotional nature by material means, which speak very imperfectly to the outward eye. The learned in such matters put forward very interesting theories, based on profound consideration of the social and religious condition of the times in which those painters lived, to explain why and how it should have come to pass that those early artists possessed that power. That they did possess it is unquestionable. Compare a Madonna by Correggio with a Madonna by Beato. The perfection of the execution of the former will put to shame the hard lines and incorrect anatomy of the latter. But it supplies to you no luminous exposition of the thoughts and inner nature of the human being represented, such as the work of the older artist gives you.

This power of expressing a faith or a feeling was the especial faculty of the artists who wrought in the days before it became necessary,—or at least very tempting,—for art to suit itself to the liking of wealthy and powerful, but very corrupt patrons. And Fra Beato possessed it in a very eminent degree; and the painting of the Annunciation at the head of the convent stair at St. Mark's is a very notable example of it. What would be the thoughts, the emotions, of a maiden receiving such an announcement as the angel came to make to Mary? It was certainly a situation involving emotion of no ordinary character. And there, in the face, the attitude of the "Annunziata," you have the Dominican painter's conception and rendering of that incident; and it is worthy of study.

Turning to the left, as one stands in front of the above picture, the half of the eastern * side of the corridor over the cloister is

* The points of the compass are given in the text, as they would be if the west front of the church faced accurately to the west. But such is not the case.

traversed; then, turning to the right, the southern limb of the quadrangle; and then, after another turn at right angles to the right, the western side; and at the further end of this are the three small closets, forming the prior's lodging. As is apparent from the above description of the locality, these cells are adjacent to the church, but they have no immediate communication with it. There was no way by which the prior could leave his cell, save by traversing three sides of the passages above the cloister.

In these three little cells,—the innermost so small as barely to allow room for a little altar, and a faldstool in front of it,—Savonarola lived; and from them he was dragged to his martyrdom in the Piazza della Signoria,—the great square in the centre of Florence.

In these three little cells various memorials of the “terribile frate” have been gathered together. In the innermost, there is a copy of an extremely curious painting of the burning of the friar, executed at the time when it occurred. It has no artistic merit whatever, but is extremely valuable as affording a most interesting illustration and confirmation of the accounts of the contemporary historians.

In the middle cell there is a very excellent copy of a contemporary portrait of the friar, and a variety of personal memorials, such as part of the hair-shirt he wore, his rosary, his mass book, and other such matters. The portrait is well worth attentive study. It is an easily read commentary on the friar's history,—very unmistakably the head of an enthusiast and a fanatic,—by no means that of a reasoner. The lower part of the face plainly declares the entirety of the conquest that has been achieved by the spirit over all the lower appetites and lusts of the flesh. Yet this lower part of the face is not, as is frequently the case in the portraits of other saints and ascetics, emptied of all meaning and expression by the force which has driven from it the expression of every earthward appetite. There remain the characteristic lines which tell of invincible firmness of will and desire of domination. The blazing eye is full of the same tale. It is at once the eye of the seer, the visionary, and the ruthless ruler over the wills of himself and others. But all above, the brow and the forehead, are poor, pinched, and mean to a very striking degree,—a genuinely monastic head.

In the outer cell there are two terra-cotta busts, which are by no means among the least noteworthy objects in the old convent. They have all the appearance of works of the sixteenth century; and to whatever epoch they may belong, they are at once seen to be the productions of no ordinary artist. One of the two is a life-size bust of Savonarola, and the other merely the terra-cotta mask of the features of an aged man. They are the works of Giovanni Bastianini, the son of a poor Florentine stone-mason, who died quite a young man a few months ago. The bust of Savonarola is an exceedingly

striking performance. A more life-like, more characteristic portrait it would be impossible to imagine. But a still more curious interest attaches to the other terra-cotta face. It is a reproduction of the face of a bust which some time since was placed among the cinque-cento treasures of the Louvre. This bust was the portrait of a workman in the tobacco manufactory at Florence, whose physiognomy had struck Bastianini as well adapted for his purpose of trying his hand at an imitation of the manner of the cinque-cento artists. When finished, he named the bust Girolamo Benvieni, who was a contemporary of Savonarola, well known in Florentine history. It is right, however, that it should be well understood that Bastianini had not the slightest intention of being a party to any fraud. He sold his bust, as the work of his hands, to a certain Florentine dealer for a few hundred francs. And the latter sold it as a genuine work,—and a very fine work,—of the sixteenth century, to the Director of the Gallery of the Louvre, for a very large sum. But, as may easily be imagined, inasmuch as Bastianini had neither worked in secret nor made any mystery about the disposal of his work when he had sold it, the fact that the bust exhibited at the Louvre as a recent acquisition of the highest importance, and a magnificent example of cinque-cento art, was in truth the work of a poor young artist at Florence, who was ready and willing to make as many more such to order as he could get orders for, and that for a very moderate sum, was well known to far too large a number of persons for it to remain long concealed. The whole history of the bust and of its author was told to the authorities at the Louvre. But the authorities at the Louvre were too much interested in their own infallibility to admit the truth of an assertion so painful to them. The story of Bastianini's handicraft was disputed by them with all the dictatorial urgency of French art-criticism; and we doubt whether, up to this moment, the merit of the bust has been conceded to its author in the catalogues of the Paris Museum.

The western side of the quadrangle, at the extremity of which are the prior's cells of which we have been speaking, contains the cells of the novices,—close under the prior's supervision, it will be observed. In each of the other cells situated on the other sides of the quadrangles, there is a fresco by Fra Beato. But in these cells of the novices the paintings, which were intended to incite to devotion, are by some meaner hand. And instead of being a series of varied pictures, as are those by Il Beato, the same representation,—a Dominican monk kneeling at the foot of the crucifix,—is repeated in all of them.

In the southern side the range of the cells of the older monks begins, and every one of them has a fresco by Beato Angelico. There is also, on the outer wall of the cells in the middle of this corridor, a larger fresco,—a Madonna and Child and Angels.

Among the cells in the eastern corridor is that of St. Antonine, a Dominican saint. And here a variety of memorials,—various objects dear to the lover of relics,—have been collected. But St. Antonine, who was canonised by Rome, has not so much interest in heretical eyes as Savonarola, whom Rome burned. And save for the fresco of Il Beato, which adorns this as all the other cells, except those of the novices, there is little that need detain us in the cell in which the Florentine saint earned his canonisation.

Nearly opposite to this cell is the entrance to the library, a fine hall divided into three naves by a double row of columns with round-headed arches. Here were once the larger part of the precious collection of manuscripts, gathered at an enormous cost by the elder Cosmo de Medici, at the time when Western Europe was awakening to the value of the literature of the old pagan world. This, in some respects, matchless collection now forms the world-famed Laurentian Library, which has found its permanent home in the library attached to the collegiate church of St. Lorenzo. This fine hall at St. Mark's, swept and garnished and repaved, has now been destined to receive the large collection of illuminated choral books, which has resulted from the suppression of the monasteries. They are conveniently exposed to view, arranged open, so as to exhibit the best page of each, under glass, at long desks extending the whole length of the library. There are some very interesting specimens of the old monastic art of illumination among them, but nothing to compete with what may be seen at Siena, at Rouen, or at Winchester.

At the extremity of this eastern side of the quadrangular corridor there is a double cell, to which an ancient inscription on a marble table calls especial attention. It tells how Pope Eugenius IV. passed the night in this cell after having consecrated the church, then newly built by Cosmo, "pater patriæ;" and, further, how the same Cosmo retained this cell for his own special use at such times as he desired to escape from the world and the cares of state and of commerce, and pass a period of retirement in contemplation and devotion.

This Pope Eugenius was then at Florence, as may be remembered, for the purpose of presiding over the Ecumenical Council, which had been assembled in the hope of arriving at some such agreement upon the points of difference which separated the Eastern from the Western Church as would have rendered it possible for them to unite under one head. As might easily have been foreseen, the attempt was futile. But the gathering of all the most learned men in Christendom at Florence was by no means without a happy result on the then nascent revival of learning.

In this cell, thus honoured once by having a pope for its occupant and many times by the occupation of the great Cosmo, the father of his country, there are two frescoes by Il Beato; one a remarkably

fine one of the Crucifixion, with the two malefactors and many figures below. Some of the heads are very fine.

Some of the very extensive buildings of the convent have been assigned to other purposes pending a decision which might make this the permanent home of the immense national wealth of pictures, statues, gems, drawings, engravings, medals, cameos, and every imaginable form of art-representation, now divided among various great galleries. The Academia della Crusca has been housed here; the apartment which it previously occupied in the Palazzo Ricardi,—now the Home Office,—being needed for other purposes. But there are three other parts of the convent on the ground floor which have been opened to the curiosity of the public, and which must by no means be forgotten,—the larger and the smaller refectory and the chapter-house.

In the larger refectory,—a noble room,—there is, not a Last Supper, as usual in similar positions, but a representation of St. Dominic with a company of his disciples at supper, served by angels, by Sogliani. The two angels, who are bringing to the table aprons full of little rolls, are of exceeding beauty. In the smaller refectory there is a painting of the Last Supper, by Ghirlandaio, marked by all the nobleness of conception that so especially characterizes his works.

But the "bonne-bouche," the grandest thing St. Mark's has to show, is a magnificent fresco of the Crucifixion, by Fra Beato, in the capitolo, or chapter-room,—chapter-house, as we more usually say. This is undoubtedly one of the noblest frescoes extant. It is very large, occupying the whole of one wall of the chamber, and consists of a great number of figures. It is in an admirable state of preservation. Till this great picture has been seen, no one can form a due estimate of the powers of Fra Beato. But it is now for the first time freely visible to all who will take the trouble to go and look at it. And it is the less necessary, therefore, to attempt any description of it. However accurately such endeavours may portray the impressions which have been made on the writer, little or no conception of the work described can be conveyed to the mind of the reader by any such means.

"*Assamarco!*"

Let him who would make acquaintance with the great Dominican artist,—the greatest master of the art of translating spiritual emotion into outward form that ever handled brush,—join his voice to that of the crowds who are once again crying "*Assamarco!*"

RURAL ENGLAND, A.D. 1500—1550.

The alternations of success and defeat which marked the course of the long struggle between the houses of York and Lancaster were attended with disastrous consequences to the power of the nobles; and the general insecurity that prevailed until the accession of Henry VII. precluded any effectual attempt on their part at repairing the losses they had sustained. It was impossible that the feudal system could survive the decay of that power by which it had been mainly upheld. Moreover, the enfranchisement of the villein class had long been steadily proceeding. Even in the reign of Henry III. we find instances of the transformation of the tenant in villenage into the copyholder; and, while this change continued to operate for the benefit of the superior class of feudal dependants, their less fortunate brethren found opportunities of evading the severe laws against migration, and, by carrying their labour to a distance, obtained under new masters an improvement in the conditions of their service.

It must not, however, be supposed that in the sixteenth century the copyholders and free labourers in husbandry had wholly replaced the villeins regardant and villeins in gross. Fitzherbert, writing about 1523, asserts that, "in some places the bonde men contynue as yet, the whiche me semeth is the grettest inconvenyent that nowe is suffred by the lawe;" and in 1527 we find the Duchess of Buckingham successfully claiming the services of four bondmen to the manor of Rompney.* But that, as a class, the villeins were extinct before the end of the century, we have the evidence of Sir Thomas Smith, who in his "*Commonwealth of England*" (1565) says: "Neither of the one sort, nor of the other, have we any number in England. And of the first [villeins in gross] I never knew any in the realm in my time. Of the second so few there be that it is not almost worth the speaking; but our law doth acknowledge them in both those sorts."

Although before the commencement of the sixteenth century the rural tenants and labourers had very generally succeeded in freeing themselves from a galling servitude, their lot was hard. The peasant proprietor of a few acres was housed in discomfort and dirt. His cottage was usually a building of timber, with walls of wattled

* See the interesting documents printed by Mr. Furnivall in his Introduction (pp. 12, 14) to the ballad "*Nowadayes*" (Ballad Society's edition).

plaster ; but, in many cases, it was a mere mud hovel. Uncertainty of tenure and, in the border counties, the dread of marauders, determined the character of the building. The roof was of thatch, and, at least until the reign of Elizabeth, the interior was lighted by lattices, "made either of wicker or fine rifts of oak in chequerwise." In some cases the place of the lattice was supplied by a panel of horn. The cottage was chimneyless. Its floor was of clay ; and if its nakedness were hidden by layers of rushes, the usual covering even in houses of a better class, cleanliness was so generally disregarded that the successive layers became in time a rotten muck-heap.

With such surroundings it would have been strange had the peasant shown much regard for personal decency. Indeed, when we find King Henry VIII. enforcing cleanliness in the royal kitchen by an ordinance that the "Scolyons . . . shall not goe naked or in garments of such vilenesse as they now doe, and have been accustomed to doe, nor lie in the nights and dayes in the kitchens or ground by the fire-side,"* we may well conclude that such habits were the rule rather than the exception in humbler households.

A day's toil in husbandry, no doubt, went far to ensure sound sleep, but the bed and bedding were of the hardest. At least, so said the old villagers, whose recollections Holinshed has recorded in his "Chronicles" (1577) : "Our fathers and we ourselves have lien full oft upon straw pallets, covered only with a sheet under coverlets, made of dagswain or hopharlots, . . . and a good round log under their heads instead of a bolster. If it were so that our fathers or the good-man of the house had a mattress or flock-bed, and thereto a sack of chaff to rest his head upon, he thought himself as well lodged as the lord of the town ; so well were they contented. Pillows were thought meet only for women in childbed. As for servants, if they had any sheet above them it was well ; for seldom had they any under their bodies to keep them from the pricking straws that ran oft through the canvas and raced their hardened hides."

From such a couch the farmer and his servants rose at four, both in winter and summer, to a day of various labour. Their work comprised much that has long ceased to form part of the husbandman's craft. Besides the ordinary duties of ploughing, sowing, reaping, and thrashing, the care of cattle and sheep, the collection of beechmasts for the swine, the hind had to make and repair the rough implements of his calling,—the yoke, the ox-bow, and the plough gear. Many a homestead had a stew for eels and hives for bees. The farm yielded, in addition to the ordinary corn-crops, hops, hemp, saffron, and mustard. The housewife had an important part in the domestic economy. It was her duty to prepare clothing for the household from the wool and flax. She measured the corn and sent it to the mill. In

* See the passage quoted in the Introduction to the "Babees Book" (Early English Text Society's edition).

her garden grew pothersbs, strewing-herbs, and herbs for use as medicines. The few fruit trees which were then known were also under her care, and she generally superintended the brewing and baking. In the smaller farms, where no servants were employed, her lot was still more laborious. According to Fitzherbert, she was in such cases required to "winnow all manner of corn, to make malt, to wash and to make hay, shear corn, and, in time of need, help her husband to fill the muck-wain or dung-cart, drive the plough, load hay, corn, and such other, go to market and sell butter or pigs, fowls or corn."

The farmer's table was supplied from his own produce. In times of plenty the fare was abundant, though coarse. Wheaten bread, as an article of daily consumption, was reserved only for the gentry; but the yeoman and his servants, who had each his appointed station at the family table, had bread of barley or rye, salted fish,—usually cod, ling, or herring,—and salted beef. The art of stall-feeding was not commonly understood or practised; hence the general consumption of salt meat, which Erasmus regarded as a cause of much disease. The fare was, however, occasionally diversified by veal and bacon, grass-fed beef, and roast meat on Sundays and Thursdays at night. Wooden trenchers and wooden spoons for the pottage were in general use. At the end of the century the platters were of pewter, and the spoons, frequently of tin, sometimes even of silver.

Of strong drinks, beer was probably as largely consumed by the agricultural population of the sixteenth as by that of the nineteenth century. Harrison, in his "*Description of England*," mentions various sorts. There was the small-beer for servants, which was seldom more than a month old, and was known as single-beer or small-ale. The more intoxicating varieties were double-beer, double-double-beer, dagger-ale, and the toper's favourite mixture known as "huff-cap," "mad-dog," "angel's food," or "dragon's milk." From fruit were made cider, perry, and mum. In Essex a drink made of water with a little honey and spice was in common use, although, in Harrison's opinion, it differed "from true metheglin as chalk doth from cheese."

Holidays and festival-days were frequent, and were observed as occasions of boisterous merriment and rude debauchery. Christmas in especial was a season of universal licence, both in town and country. Plough Monday, however, was exclusively a rural festival. It was celebrated on the first Monday after Twelfth-day. A plough was dragged from house to house by a motley crowd of ploughmen and dancers, among whom the "Bessy" and the fool were conspicuous. He who refused the customary plough-money was punished by having the soil of his threshhold ploughed up. On May-day the great pole, gaily ornamented with garlands and ribbons, was drawn to the village green by many a yoke of oxen, amid the antics of Robin Hood, Maid Marian, Little John, Friar Tuck, the hobby-horse,

the dragon, and the morrice-dancers with their jingling bells. Midsummer Eve, or the Vigil of St. John the Baptist, saw all dwellings decorated with green birch, long fennel, St. John's rush, and orpin ; while at night the young and active danced and capered round huge bonfires. New-year's Day was marked by the giving and receiving of presents. In the evening the village maidens carried the wassail-bowl brimming with spiced ale from house to house. Shrove Tuesday was disgraced by the barbarous practice of throwing at cocks. At Easter there were games at hand-ball ; while on Hock-day, or binding-day, in the week following the second Sunday after Easter, the sport of binding and loosing commemorated the deliverance of Saxon England from the Danish power. Lastly, on St. Valentine's Day, the old pagan rites of the Lupercalia graced a festival consecrated to the memory of a Christian bishop and martyr.

Among festivities of local observance may be mentioned the Church ales at Whitsuntide and Easter, and the wakes. On the occasion of the Church ale, "huff-cap" in mighty quantities was brewed for sale in the churchyard, and the profits being devoted to pious purposes, the charitably-disposed were enabled to enjoy the double luxury of getting drunk and of satisfying the needs of the Church. Wakes were originally open-air vigils for devotional exercise in commemoration of the dedication of churches or the birthdays of saints ; but feasting and revelry soon deprived these meetings of their religious character, while the facilities which they offered for the interchange of commodities among the inhabitants of neighbouring towns and parishes at last converted them into fairs.

Most of the festivals which have been mentioned were marked by their especial sports, but besides these the villagers had many outdoor exercises with which they diversified their hours of leisure. Many of these were condemned by the legislation, which had for its object the encouragement of archery practice. Thus, on Sundays and other holidays, instead of occupying themselves at the butts, the rustics were to be found enjoying the excitement of play "at bowls, quoits, dice, kails, and other unthrifty games." But such sports as these, the numerous varieties of the dance,—of which that known as the "cushion dance" was certainly not marked by excess of decorum,—and the favourite game of merelles, or nine men's morris, were less undeserving of favour than the barbarous practices of bear-baiting and bull-baiting. Sometimes apes were subjected to similar torture. Cock-fighting, again, was much in vogue, and, indeed, even now, though generally discountenanced and suppressed, it cannot be said to be wholly abolished.

The legislature, it has been said, enjoined the assiduous practice of archery. The statute of Winchester, 13 Edw. I. cap. 6, enacts that "every man between fifteen years of age and sixty years shall be assessed and sworn to armour, according to the quantity of his

lands and goods. . . . For forty shillings lands, a sword, a bow and arrows, and a dagger. And all others that may shall have bows and arrows." By statutes of Richard II. and Henry IV., all able-bodied men were required to employ their leisure at the butts, "as valiant Englishmen ought to do." But the Wars of the Roses had found the bowmen more than enough of practice, and the reaction from the fierce struggle between York and Lancaster was shown in the disinclination of the higher classes for the tilt-yard, and of the yeomen for exercise at the butts. Archery, therefore, was falling into disuse, when, in 1511, Parliament re-enacted the statute of Winchester, with the additional provisions that "every man being the king's subject, not lame, decrepid, or maimed, being within the age of sixty years, except spiritual men, justices of the one bench and of the other, justices of the assize, and barons of the exchequer, do use and exercise shooting in long-bows, and also do have a bow and arrows ready continually in his house to use himself in shooting. And that every man having a man child or men children in his house shall provide for all such, being of the age of seven years and above, and till they shall come to the age of seventeen years, a bow and two shafts to learn them and bring them up in shooting; and after such young men shall come to the age of seventeen years, every of them shall provide and have a bow and four arrows continually for himself at his proper costs and charges, or else of the gift and provision of his friends, and shall use the same as afore is rehearsed." In 1541 an amended edition of this statute was passed. Amongst other additional provisions, each village was required to maintain a pair of butts, and no person under the age of twenty-four was to be permitted to shoot with the light-flight arrow at a distance of less than 200 yards; and that the games which had usurped the place of the archery-drill might be effectually abolished, it was enacted that "no manner of artificer or craftsman of any handicraft or occupation, husbandman, apprentice, labourer, servant at husbandry, journeyman or servant of artificer, mariners, fishermen, watermen, or any serving man, shall from the . . . Feast of the Nativity of St. John Baptist play at the tables, tennis, dice, cards, bowls, clash, coying, logating, or any other unlawful game out of Christmas, under the pain of xx^s, to be forfeit for every time; and in Christmas to play at any of the said games in their masters' houses or in their masters' presence; and also that no manner of persons shall at any time play at any bowl or bowls in open places out of his garden or orchard, upon the pain for every time so offending to forfeit vi^s viii^d."

The State, thus solicitous for the physical training of its subjects, had not much concern for their intellectual well-being. Man's higher needs received scant attention from the old law-makers. In 1888 it was ordained that "he or she which used to labour at the plough or cart, or other labour or service of husbandry, till they be of the

age of twelve years, that from henceforth they shall abide at the same labour without being put to any mystery or handicraft."* Such legislation was of course futile, yet it was persisted in. The statute 7 Hen. IV. c. 17, admits the failure of the former Act, but provides a remedy by prohibiting, under pain of fine and imprisonment, any person not possessed of "land or rent to the value of twenty shillings by the year at the least," from apprenticing son or daughter to any "craft or other labour within any city or borough in the realm . . . provided always that every man and woman of what estate or condition that he be, shall be free to set their son or daughter to take learning at any manner school that pleaseth them within the realm."

Upon the authority of Bishop Latimer, Mr. Froude has asserted that in the time of Henry VIII. "the universities were well filled by the sons of yeomen chiefly. The cost of supporting them at the colleges was little, and wealthy men took a pride in helping forward any boys of promise."† That the university scholars in early days were, for the most part, poor men's children, there is probably little doubt, but if at the beginning of Henry VIII.'s reign the great schools at Oxford and Cambridge were recruited from the sons of the yeomanry, the lapse of a few years brought about a change for the worse. Latimer, in his seventh sermon before King Edward VI.,—preached in March, 1549,—warns his hearers that "if they bring it to pass that the yeomanry be not able to put their sons to school,—as, indeed, universities do wondrously decay already,"—they will "pluck salvation from the people, and utterly destroy the realm. For by yeomen's sons, the faith of Christ is, and hath been maintained chiefly;"‡ and in the reign of Elizabeth the poor scholars had been so far displaced, that we are informed that although the colleges "were created by their founders at the first only for poor men's sons, whose parents were not able to bring them up unto learning, . . . now they have the least benefit of them, by reason the rich do so encroach upon them. . . . Such packing is used at elections [to fellowships] that not he which best deserveth, but he that hath most friends, though he be the worst scholar, is always surest to speed. . . . In some grammar schools, likewise, which send scholars to these universities, it is lamentable to see what bribery is used, for ere the scholar can be preferred such bribery is made that poor men's sons are commonly shut out, and the richer sort received."§

In the monastery schools, where the chief subjects of instruction were grammar and church-music, a free education was provided for the children of "all the neighbours that desired it;" but while the

* 12 Ric. II. cap. 5.

† History of England, vol. i. p. 47.

‡ Sermons of Bishop Latimer (Parker Soc. ed.), p. 102.

§ See the passage quoted in Introduction to the "Babees Book" (Early English Text Soc. ed.), p. xxxvii.

statutes of Richard II. and Henry IV., referred to above, remained in force, it is extremely probable that only those sons of the cottier-tenant and husbandman who might be destined to the service of the Church, would be received as scholars.

The monastic schools passed away with the system which maintained them, and the educational want thus created was supplied by the foundation of numerous grammar schools. These schools were in many instances attached to cathedrals, and in nearly all there was special provision made for choral training. How far the small farmers' sons were likely to be welcomed in these institutions may be gathered from what took place on the occasion of the reconstitution of the cathedral church of Canterbury. "At this erection were present Thomas Cranmer, archbishop, with divers other commissioners. . . . It came to pass that when they should elect the children of the grammar school, there were of the commissioners more than one or two who would have none admitted but sons or younger brethren of gentlemen. As for other, husbandmen's children, they were more meet, they said, for the plough, and to be artificers, than to occupy the place of the learned sort." To his honour, be it said, the archbishop opposed this illiberal outbreak of class prejudice. He reminded his brother commissioners that the children of the poor were not unfrequently gifted "with eloquence, memory, apt pronunciation, sobriety, and such like," and their hard nurture would render them "commonly more apt to apply their study." His opponents again and again returned to the charge, and were as often discomfited by the archbishop's sound reasoning. Finally said the archbishop, "if the gentleman's son be apt to learning, let him be admitted; if not apt, let the poor man's child that is apt enter his room."^{*}

But although there is reason to fear that an adequate share in the endowments for intellectual training was, in too many instances, denied to the rustic poor, the increasing attraction of dramatic representations shows that the apathy of ignorance had not wholly deadened their craving for a knowledge of things beyond the narrow circle of their daily experience. The original object of the mysteries and miracle plays, which were introduced into England about the beginning of the twelfth century, was to excite and keep alive an interest in the lessons of religion by dramatic illustrations, based upon the leading events in the Biblical histories, and in the lives of the saints and martyrs. The authors and actors of these plays were the clergy. They were represented on Sundays and holidays in churches and churchyards, and were occasionally performed at the expense of the municipal corporations and trading companies. Among the subjects to which these rude dramas were devoted, we find—the Creation, the Fall, Noah and the Flood, the Israelites in Egypt, the Birth of Christ

* Whiston's "Cathedral Trusts," quoted in Introduction to "Babees Book" (pp. li. lii.).

and Offering of the Magi, with the Flight into Egypt and Murder of the Innocents, the Resurrection and Ascension, the Destruction of Jerusalem, and Doomsday. The movable structure in which these plays were usually performed consisted “of a high house or carriage, which stood upon six wheels. It was divided into two rooms, one above the other. In the lower room were the performers; the upper was the stage. This ponderous vehicle was painted and gilt, surmounted with burnished vanes and streamers, and decorated with imagery. It was hung round with curtains, and a painted cloth presented a picture of the subject that was to be performed. This simple stage had its machinery too; it was fitted for the representation of an earthquake or a storm, and the pageant in most cases was concluded in the noise and flame of fireworks.”* In most of these pageants the Devil played an important part, and so popular and amusing was his character that in the allegorical moralities, which very generally replaced the miracles, it was retained and strengthened by the introduction of a highly farcical personage,—the Vice,—who, with his dagger of lath and rude buffoonery, helped to excite the mirth of the audience, and to diversify the serious monotony of the dialogue.

The character of these representations was at first much altered for the worse by the change in the national system of ecclesiastical polity; but subject to certain restrictions they were still tolerated. A statute of 1543, which is described as an “Act for the Advancement of True Religion, and for the Abolishment of the Contrary,” was directed against “printed books, printed ballads, plays, rhymes, songs, and other fastasies,” which tended to the perversion of the established doctrine; but so far as they meddled not with interpretations of Scripture contrary to that doctrine, “songs, plays, and interludes,” might still be “used and exercised within this realm and other the king’s dominions, for the rebuking and reproaching of vice, and the setting forth of virtue.”

The statute thus recognises the strong hold upon the popular mind which the ballad singer still retained. Even in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, when the minstrel no longer commanded the goodly entertainment and lavish rewards bestowed upon his order in the days of chivalry, we have evidence that the exercise of his art was not altogether unprofitable, and that it was especially the delight of the commonalty. Puttenham describes the audience of the “common rimer” as consisting of “boys or country fellows that passe by them in the streeete.” Such an audience might well be attracted by the “small and popular musickes, sung by these cantabaniqvi upon benches and barrels’ heads, or else by blind harpers, or such like taverne minstrels, that give a fit of mirth for a groat . . . their matter being for the most part stories of old time, as the tale of Sir Topas, the reportes of Bevis of Southampton, Guy of Warwicke, Adam Bell, and

* “William Shakespere: a Biography.” Chas. Knight. p. 95.

Clymme of the Clough, and such other old romances or historical rimes, made purposely for recreation of the common people at Christmasse dinners and bridales, and in tavernes and ale-houses, and such other places of base resorte."*

In his opening chapter, on the social condition of our country in the sixteenth century, Mr. Froude has drawn a vivid picture of "merry England" in the days when hospitality was one of its especial glories. He tells us that "the habits of all classes were open, free, and liberal," and that "in such frank style the people lived, hating three things with all their hearts: idleness, want, and cowardice; and for the rest, carrying their hearts high, and having their hands full."† Moreover, one of the main conclusions to be deduced from his spirited summary of the social condition of the period is, that "the working man of modern times has bought the extension of his liberty at the price of his material comfort."‡ To confute these views, supported as they are by earnest eloquence no less than by a mass of evidence, carefully selected and strikingly arranged, is a task only to be accomplished by one who may be able to communicate the results of profound research in a style as impressive as that of the historian of the Tudors. No such ambitious aim has inspired these notes. They are, for the most part, drawn from sources long since opened to the general reader; and if, in any case, they venture upon views which do not accord with the conclusions of the gifted writer who has laboured long and successfully in the wide field of sixteenth-century history, such views can lay no claim to originality or to exclusive accuracy. Yet it must be confessed that the spirit of contemporary literature and records appears, in many instances, at variance with Mr. Froude's conclusions. It may be that this discord is apparent, not real. To grumble is to Englishmen a dear privilege; and it is possible that the pamphleteers, preachers, and ballad-writers, may have exercised this privilege too freely. It may be that for us the mists of time, and prejudice, obscure the real glories of the "merry England" of the Tudors. It may be that the picture is studied from an unfavourable stand-point. The untrained eye of the amateur critic may fail to discover beauties, or may exaggerate trifling blemishes. But if all this be conceded to those who adopt Mr. Froude's opinions, it will hardly suffice to dissipate the dark clouds that fling an ominous gloom over the bright sunshine of Tudor England, and bring out, in bold relief, many a trace of suffering and crime.

Hume, in ascribing to Henry VII. a far-seeing policy, which had for its constant aim the exaltation of the royal dignity by the depression of the nobles, has characterised the Statute of Fines (4 Hen. VII. c. 24) as "the most important law in its consequences

* Arte of English Poesie (1589), p. 69.

† History of England, vol. i. pp. 44, 45.

‡ History of England, vol. i. p. 91.

which was enacted during the reign of Henry." By means of this law, which conferred the power of disentailing settled estates, and the "beginning luxury and refinements of the age, the great fortunes of the barons were gradually dissipated, and the property of the commons increased in England." Mr. Hallam has clearly shown that whatever credit may be due to the policy which actuated this measure must, in justice, be attributed to Henry's predecessor, in whose reign a statute of very similar effect was passed. It is certain, however, that at the beginning of the sixteenth century many great estates were alienated from their noble owners, and became the property of wealthy traders. The effect of this change was soon apparent in the rapid conversion of large tracts of arable land into pasture; for the profits of the wool trade were too tempting to the capitalist to encourage a system of agriculture which, at the best, yielded but a small return, and was too often attended with loss.

In a statute of 1488-9 (4 Hen. VII. c. 16) the Isle of Wight is described as "decayed of people by reason that many towns and villages have been let down, and the fields dyked and made pastures for beasts and cattle, and also many dwelling places, farms, and farmholds, have of late time been used to be taken into one man's hold and hands, that of old time were wont to be in many several persons' holds and hands, and many several households kept in them." As a remedy for these evils, it was enacted, that "no maner of person . . . shall take any several farms more than one, whereof the yearly value shall not exceed the sum of ten marks." Moreover, the lessee of several farms of a higher value, was required to "choose one farmhold at his pleasure," and his other leases were to be utterly void. These provisions were afterwards extended to the rest of the kingdom, but no practical good came of such legislation.*

A petition of 1514 names the various classes of capitalists who were charged with "great and covitous misvsages of the ffermes." These were not only "divers gentlemen, but also diverse and manye merchantes adventurers, clothmakers, goldsmythes, bochers, tannars, and other artificers," and the petitioners dwell with much homely vigour upon the plenty and comfort of the past, when "every acre of lond, tilled and ploughed, bere the strawe and chaffe, besides the corne, able and sufficient, with the helpe of the shakke in the stobill, to socoure and fede as many great beastes, as horses, oxen, and kyen, as the land would kepe, layed in leyes," and when there was "fedde and brought up at every barne dore, hennes, capons, gees, duckes, swyne, and other pultrie."†

A proclamation followed this petition, requiring the holders of more than one farm, upon pain of the royal indignation and displeasure, to

* 4 Hen. VII. c. 19.

† Printed in the Appendix to "Nowadayes" (Ballad Soc. ed.), p. 101.

till the land to the same extent as was customary in the first year of Henry VII. This proclamation appears to have had but small effect, for in the year after its issue (1515-16) it was deemed necessary to legislate against the engrossers and enclosers. The preamble to the statute 7 Hen. VIII. c. 1, presents a forcible summary of the evils arising from the conversion of arable land into pasture. It affirms that in "some one town, 200 persons,—men, and women, and children,—and their ancestors out of time of mind, were daily occupied and lived by sowing of corn and grains, breeding of cattle and other increase necessary for many's sustenance, and now the said persons and their progenies be minished and decreased, whereby the husbandry, which is the greatest commodity of this realm for sustenance of man, is greatly decayed, churches destroyed, the service of God withdrawn, Christian people there buried not prayed for, the patrons and curates wronged, cities, market towns, brought to great ruin and decay, necessities for many's sustenance made scarce and dear," and "the people sore minished in the realm." To redress this state of things it was enacted that all habitations occupied for the purposes of husbandry, wilfully suffered or caused to fall down and decay, should be rebuilt at the owner's cost; that all tillage land turned into pasture should be restored to tillage within a year; and that half the value of the land on which "houses of husbandry" were not rebuilt or repaired, should be forfeited to the king or the lord of the fee until the houses were restored. But in spite of such legislation, the sheep-fold continued to oust the husbandman from his holding. Fifteen years after the passing of the last Act the Statute Book shows another attempt to restrain the profitable investment of the capital of those "to whom God of his goodness hath disposed great plenty and abundance of movable substance." The Act 25 Hen. VIII. c. 13, complains of the rise in the rents of land and of the price of provisions. It alleges that a "marvellous multitude and number of people be so discouraged with misery and poverty that they fall daily to theft, robbery, and other inconvenience, or pitifully die for hunger and cold." On some pastures were to be found as many as 33,000 sheep. A good sheep which could formerly be purchased for 2s. 4d. or 3s. at the most, was then sold for 6s., 5s., or 4s. at the least. There was a corresponding rise in the price of wool. Formerly a stone of clothing wool in some counties had been sold for 1s. 6d. or 1s. 8d., in others for 2s. 8d., 2s. 8d., or 3s. These prices had been increased to 8s. 9d. or 4s., and 4s. 8d. or 5s. It was, therefore, enacted that no person should keep above 2,000 sheep under a penalty of 3s. 4d. a sheep.

The literature of the time no less than the Statute Book abounds in complaint of the misery of the husbandman. In William Roy's Satire against Wolsey (1527), there is much bitter invective against the greed of the abbots.

Rents, says the satirist, are raised to the impoverishment of the
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honest householder. £30 is now demanded for a farm that formerly was let for £20. . . . One or two rich franklins occupy a dozen men's livings. . . . Sturdy yeomen are replaced by poor silly shepherds content to live on milk and whey.

In a tract from which Mr. Furnivall quotes in his Introduction to "Nowadayes," there is a curious calculation of the extent of the losses occasioned by the suppression of husbandry in Oxfordshire. The writer estimates that in that county, since the accession of Henry VII., as many as forty ploughs had become idle. The labour of each plough would produce sufficient to satisfy six persons, and with a rent of six, seven, or eight pounds, would enable the yeoman to sell thirty quarters of grain a year.

The causes of misery alluded to by the ballad writers were in full operation in the reign of Edward VI. Indeed, the redistribution of the estates of the abbeys and monasteries, while it enriched many, "vpstart gentylmen,"* must have been felt severely in the rural districts. There is no lack of evidence that in too many instances the depravity of the monastic societies fully justified their suppression. The vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience too often passed unheeded as the mere formulas of a profession, or served only to hide from the scrutiny of the outer world a hot-bed of foul abomination. But though there is sufficient ground for believing that the misuse of the wealth with which the religious houses had been endowed by the piety of past generations, had long been the rule rather than the exception, there was still to be found a minority of earnest brethren faithfully discharging the duties of their trust, and applying the funds at their disposal in alleviation of the misery that surrounded them. The withdrawal of this bounty was not accomplished gradually. There was a sudden severance of the relations which had so long subsisted between the monasteries and their poor dependents, and though England has no cause to regret the ultimate results of the policy that determined this change, its immediate operation was fraught with renewed suffering to the rural poor. In the reign of Edward VI. the discontent of the country districts broke out in open rebellion. Encouraged by a proclamation of the Protector Somerset against enclosures, and inflamed by the arts of the dispossessed clergy, the peasantry "assembling themselves in unlawfull wise, chose to them capteins and leaders, brake open the enclosures, cast downe ditches, killed up the deare which they found in the parkes, spoiled and made havocke, after the maner of an open rebellion." The insurrection was speedily quelled. The leaders were hanged; but the people long brooded over the grievances which had driven them to arms.

This hasty sketch of the condition of the rural population during the first half of the sixteenth century is now drawing to its close;

* Vox Populi, Vox Dei, I. 260. (Ballad Soc. ed.)

but before finally dismissing the subject, it may be well to consider the action of the Government in two important particulars; the regulation of the prices of provisions, and the treatment of the pauper class.

When we reflect how recent is the growth of a general acquiescence in the true principles of supply and demand, we may well refrain from indiscriminate censure of the policy which in the reign of Henry VIII., as in that of his predecessors, dictated an interference in the course of the trade in the chief necessities of life. Such a policy was then regarded as worthy of the most enlightened statesmen. It was applauded by honest philanthropists as providing the only sure means of checking the rapacity of the traders. How far it merited this applause is a question to which experience has furnished a convincing reply.

In an Act passed in the twenty-fourth year of the reign of Henry VIII., we find the usual complaint of the high price of provisions generally, and especially of beef, pork, mutton, and veal. The remedies provided were as follows. The meat was to be sold by avoirdupois weight, and to be "cut out in reasonable pieces, according to the request of the buyer;" and the seller was required to have at hand "sufficient beam-scales and weights sealed." Beef and pork were to be sold at prices not exceeding "one halfpenny a pound; mutton and veal at prices not exceeding one halfpenny and half farthing;" but the heads, necks, and offal, were to be sold at a lower rate. No calf above the age of eight weeks was to be sold as veal but as beef; and where, before the passing of the Act, meat had been sold at lower prices than those prescribed, such prices were to be the limit in future sales. In the statute 25 Hen. VIII. c. 1, it is stated that the former Act had been wilfully disregarded, and the mayors, sheriffs, constables, bailiffs, and other "governors of cities, boroughs, and market towns" were empowered to commit obstinate butchers to prison, and to sell their stock for ready money at the prices fixed by law. These Acts, however, were suspended by 27 Hen. VIII. c. 6, and the cause of this indulgence to the butchers was alleged to be the "great dearth of all manner of victuals," occasioned "as well by murrain and dearth of such cattle as by great waters and unseasonable weathers." Six years later, upon the prayer of the wardens, masters, and fellowship of the butchers of the City of London and all other butchers within the realm, the statutes fixing the prices of meat were formally repealed.

Simultaneously with the Act which provided for the compulsory sale of the stock of offending butchers, had been passed an "Act of Proclamation to be made concerning Victuals." The preamble to this Act recognises the difficulty of fixing certain prices upon articles of food, but at the same time laments the evils of engrossing and regrating. It, therefore, provides that upon reasonable complaint

of a rise in prices, the Lords of the Council shall be empowered by proclamation to prescribe the conditions of sale of cheese, butter, capons, hens, chickens, &c. Under the authority conferred by this statute a proclamation was issued in the reign of Edward VI. (1550), which contains much interesting information as to the prices which then appeared to be reasonable. White wheat of the best sort was to be sold at 18s. 4d. a quarter; white wheat of the second sort and red wheat of the best sort at 11s. a quarter; grey wheat of the best sort at 10s. a quarter; and all other descriptions at 8s. The best malt was to be sold at 10s., and the second sort at 8s. a quarter. The prices of rye were fixed at 7s. and 6s. a quarter; of barley at 9s. and 7s.; of beans and peas at 5s. and 3s. 8d.; and oats at 4s. A pound of fresh butter was to be sold for not more than 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. The price of barrelled butter of Essex and of Essex cheese was to be not more than a half-penny and a half-farthling; that of barrelled butter and of cheese of other districts not more than three farthings. It should be added that in comparing these prices with our present market rates, allowance must be made for the systematic debasement of the coin which prevailed until the time of Elizabeth.

During the reign of Henry VIII. and his successor the legislation for the repression of pauperism and vagrancy is chiefly remarkable for its barbarity. It was not until the 43rd of Elizabeth that any successful attempt was made by compulsory assessment to provide for the maintenance of the destitute, although the statute, 27 Hen. VIII. c. 25, enjoined magistrates and churchwardens to make collections of "charitable and voluntary alms" on Sundays, holidays, and festivals, for the relief of the impotent and the employment of the able-bodied. To the latter class no mercy was shown. The statute 22 Hen. VIII. c. 12, which empowered justices of the peace to license the impotent poor to beg within certain limits, and exempted from punishment as vagrants the begging scholars of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge who could produce an authority under the seal of their university, ordered that vagrants, unable to give an account of how they obtained their livelihood, should be apprehended by the constables, and, tied naked to a cart's tail, be beaten with whips through the nearest market town, or hamlet, till their bodies were bloody by reason of such whipping. The vagrant was afterwards to be sent to the place of his birth, or where he had last resided for three years, with a certificate of his whipping; and he was then enjoined to "put himself to labour like as a true man oweth to do." If one whipping failed to produce the desired reformation, the offender,—after the 27 Hen. VIII. c. 25,—was not only whipped again, but also had the "upper part of the gristle of his right ear clean cut off; so as it may appear for a perpetual token after that time that he hath been a contemner of the good order of the commonwealth."

Crop-eared rogues soon became plentiful, and it became necessary to devise new measures for their repression. The temper of the ruling classes is shown in one of the most inhuman enactments that can be found among our statutes. An "Act for the Punishment of Vagabonds and for the Relief of the Poor and Impotent Persons,"—1 Edw. VI. c. 3,—repealed all statutes "heretofore made for the punishment of vagabonds and sturdy beggars." It then provided that every able-bodied man or woman, without sufficient means of subsistence, found lurking in any house, loitering, or idly wandering along the highway or in the streets of cities, towns, and villages, and neglecting for three or more days to apply themselves to "some honest and allowed art, science, service, or labour," or leaving their work after having engaged themselves to labour for meat and drink, should be taken for a vagabond. Any person might bring the vagabond before two justices of the peace; and they, after sufficient proof of the offence by two honest witnesses, or the confession of the offender, were empowered to "cause the said loiterer to be marked with an hot iron in the breast, the mark of V." The justices were then to adjudge the vagabond to be the slave for two years of the person by whom he had been brought before them. The conditions of slavery were, that the wretched vagrant should be employed in any work, however vile; that his industry should be enforced by beating or chaining; and that his master should supply him with bread and water or "small drink, and such refuse of meat" as he might think fit. Runaway slaves might be punished by a course of chaining and beating at the hands of their masters; and, if brought again before the justices, were to be branded with an S on the forehead or the cheek, and to be adjudged to perpetual slavery. The penalty of a second desertion was death.

Children found in the company of beggars, or,—if between the ages of five and fourteen,—wandering about as vagabonds, might be brought before a justice, one of the constables of the parish, and two witnesses; and on the person, so bringing them, undertaking to instruct them in some honest labour or occupation,—until the age of twenty in the case of girls, and of eighteen in that of boys,—they were to be bound by the justices as servants or apprentices. Desertion was to be punished, as in the case of the slaves, by chaining and beating. Slaves and apprentices, like movable goods or chattels, might be let, sold, bequeathed, or given away by their masters. Lastly, the master of a slave might compel him to wear a ring of iron on his neck, arm, or leg.

With this savage law in operation, well might Ascham exclaim;—
"Vita quæ nunc vivitur a plurimis, non vita sed miseria est!"

CHAN PANAGHIR.

PROBABLY but few Englishmen can claim personal acquaintance with the river Granicus. For most of us indeed its name would hardly suggest any idea, or awaken any association, less remote than the battle stories of Alexander and Darius, of Lueullus and Mithridates; stories more than two thousand years old, but fresh in the world's memory; telling a tale that owns, too, a modern parallel, of swarming Eastern armies scattered by mere handfuls of brave warriors from the West.

After these battles the Granicus figures no more in the scenes of history, but appears to have retired, as it were, into private life; where, unremembered for a score of centuries, ever creeping from its source in the dripping caves of Ida, it has held its way, threading mountain maze and forest gloom, to reach the bright plains of Bithynia, and hasten hence to its rest on the heaving bosom of Propontis. It is in its modern and purely domestic character that the reader will make acquaintance with the Granicus in this paper.

On its course, a few miles below the spot which history marks as the theatre of Alexander's triumph over the Persian host, a cluster of Turkish villages has gathered round a grassy plain, whose broad slopes offer pasture for the flocks and herds of their residents. The little village of Chan forms the centre of this group, and gives its name to a "Panaghir," or fair, which is annually held in the meadows that separate it from the river. It is a curious coincidence that this fair takes place on the 22nd of May, old style, the date assigned to Alexander's victory. Dealers from all parts of the province, and even from Roumelia and the Thracian Chersonese, flock to the fair, which lasts three days; the first day being devoted to transactions in livestock, and the other two to miscellaneous dealings and amusement. On the third day the fair breaks up and migrates to Boghasheri, whence,—after a week's sojourn,—it moves still farther eastward into the cotton-growing district of Baluk-hissar; and there it finally disperses.

From the forts of the Hellespont the village of Chan lies distant sixteen camel-drivers' hours, which at the usual reckoning makes the journey about fifty English miles; but all our party,—whose progress to the fair of 1869 is here to be described,—agreed that the camel-drivers make several hours too much of it.

The tents and heavy baggage having been sent forward the previous evening, we started at sunrise,—a party of eight, besides servants,—

all mounted, riding in Indian file, owing to the narrowness of the roads, and headed by Hajee Yusuf, the cavass. For the first five miles our route lay between vineyards and cultivated fields on the left, and the broad bed of the Rhodius on the right,—the fierce winter torrent now reduced to a placid stream, stealing through a labyrinth of sandy islets covered with planes and tamarisks. Then culture ceased; wooded hills closed in upon the river, and Turkish villages appearing here and there amidst the forest green, looked, in their rude unsightliness, like batches of exuberant mud-pies.

Alone at the water-side, and aloof from this architectural pastray, stands a small group of buildings nearly hidden in a bower of plane trees, whose pale green foliage darkens in the shadows of lofty cypresses. Here Ali Baba, the Dervish of Sarjik, leads his lonely life of reputed holiness, and does no insignificant business in agricultural produce with the neighbouring villages. He is a Bektash, and even for that liberal sect of Mahomedans, is a very free-thinker, especially on the subject of ardent liquors.

Still narrowing, the valley of the Rhodius at length becomes a gorge, separating two lofty volcanic hills, of which the summit of one is crowned by the ruins of an ancient castle. The upper works of this fortification are Genoese, but the foundations are Greek, and of far greater antiquity. No local traditions exist respecting the ruin. Whatever may have been its earliest history, it seems probable that the present structure was raised either about the time of the expulsion of the Latins from Constantinople in the middle of the thirteenth century, or a hundred years later, with a view to checking the advance of Othman's forces into Bithynia. The latter theory would appear to be the more plausible of the two.

Constantly crossing and re-crossing the river, the road follows the course of the valley, pent in at one moment between pine-shaded rocks, the stream a sullen pool, green-fringed with shivering reeds, at another opening out into a parched waste, the brown grass full of white and purple cistus and yellow euphorbia, the river making merry in its expanded channel, and losing itself among the roots of the plane trees.

The small amount of traffic along this route,—which is one of the trunk roads of the province—shows how little commercial activity there is in the country. At rare intervals you may meet a string of camels laden with grain, and now and then the ear is deceived by sounds like distant music, but which nearing, grow into a deafening screech, and indicate the approach of heavily laden timber-carts drawn by fierce-eyed buffaloes, bending low their necks under the yoke as they toil wearily along the sandy track. A little grease on the axles would silence the screeching, but the drivers think their cattle work more cheerfully for it.

Up a gorge branching out of our valley we saw a small village

with a disproportionately large mosque in it; and there we decided on making our mid-day halt. The village is called Ortajá, and is a dreary scorched up place, perched among treeless rocks, without water and without shade. However, we took shelter in the wide verandah of the mosque, and reposed ourselves until the lengthening shadow of its minaret showed that we might proceed on our journey without the discomfort of a perpendicular sun.

Not until we had crossed the Rhodius twenty-seven times did we part company with it; and then our route lay up a toilsome ascent of nearly an hour, which brought us to the village of Karajilar. This part of the country abounds in mineral springs, of which some stand in high repute for their therapeutic qualities. One on the outskirts of the village, which had been trapped, and was conveyed for some distance in wooden troughs, invited examination. The water was slightly warm, tasted of "flat-irons," and left a rusty sediment wherever it flowed. The beauty of its situation, and the more material advantages it derives from the adjacent forests, rich in timber, in grassy glades, and in limpid springs, invest Karajilar with an ideality less squalid than most of its fellows of the mud-pie order. Stoutly built of forest wood, the rude huts look solid, habitable, and picturesque; and the cattle, silvery and sleek, that group themselves in the pathways, agitating their owners by erratic propensities, break the deadly stillness that usually pervades a Turkish village, and impress the mind with the idea of comfort and pastoral ease.

After leaving the village,—which furnished us with milk, eggs, and that Oriental rival to Devonshire cream called by the Turks *cäimak*,—the road dips down into a valley, and climbing up the other side, buries itself in an oak forest of great extent. In about half-an-hour we came to a stone fountain, with a long line of wooden drinking troughs; and a few yards beyond opened a broad glade,—a square half mile of green park-like pasture, tufted here and there with brakes and thickets. During the fair, the police have a station in this tempting spot, so that it becomes a favourite camping-ground while the stream of traffic which feeds the gathering lasts; and thus for five days in the year the wondering cattle are ousted from a favourite haunt, and unwillingly cede to biped intruders the pastures in which they are wont to roam unmolested.

Our tents were ready pitched, and a detachment of Osmanli police were smoking narghilies under a "chardak," or bower, which did duty as a station-house. Old Hajee Yusuf, our cavass, painfully drawing his cumbrous watch, sheathed in many cases of metal, leather, and tortoise-shell, and chained to his person by cyclopean fetters, informed us that we had consumed two less than the traditional number of hours in accomplishing this part of our journey. Questioned as to the metal of which his bonds were forged, the Hajee informed us

that "by permission of the consul and ourselves they were of silver, but that under the influence of our shadows they would become gold." The announcement of this alchymistic virtue in our shadows, was conveyed in a long parabolic discourse, for the Hajee is an Arab, and employs metaphor in his conversation with bewildering liberality.

The police-bower appeared also to serve as a coffee-house; for the proprietors were entertaining, if such it can be called, a very unentertainable party of mussafirs, bound, like ourselves, to the fair. A pedlar, a hideously emaciated beggar, and a long-haired young Dervish, in charge of an older member of his order, blind from small-pox, composed the company; and it may be supposed that hilarity did not predominate in a party so unfavourably constituted; indeed, the silence was only broken by disjointed murmurs of conversation, and the sleepy bubble of the narghilies. At a little distance, under a group of young oaks, a jovial party of Greek muleteers chattily beguiled the weariness of the ante-œnial hour, watching with lively interest the progress of a spithecocked lamb that was slowly browning over the embers of a wood fire. The horses were all picketed round the camp. By-and-by the stars stole out, the lamb-fed muleteers dropped asleep, and no sound disturbed the glade but the crooning of the Turks in their bower, the shrill creak of the wood-cricket, and the occasional challenge of some quick-eared steed, suspicious of the weird night-whispers of the forest.

With the earliest sun-rays came the confused jangle of distant camel-bells. In summer the "ship of the desert" navigates only when the shadows are long, and lies at anchor in some sheltered haven when the sun is high. The tintinabulation which greeted us as we awoke, heralded the arrival of camels that had passed the night in the glens of the Rhodius, and were already drawing near the end of their morning stage. But before the first shaggy neck emerged from the trees, parties of horsemen appeared upon the ground,—Jews, chiefly, their saddles overlaid with pillows; here and there a sleek Armenian in shining broadcloth; and then a stately Turk, patriarch of his village, bearded and grave, riding an unpromising looking pony, an ambler or rahvan, that despite his straight shoulder and ragged hips will roll along for ten hours at a stretch, regardless alike of the atrocity of the roads and of the eighteen stone under which he travels them.

Many peasant groups, too, appeared. First would come a veiled woman, whose dusky feet peered out from her loose black cotton trousers, and hid themselves in yellow shoes, and whose white outer garment completely draped her figure as she sat astride a wooden pack-saddle, beneath which writhed a donkey, or perchance a small crooked-legged mare; the rest of the family, women similarly-clad, and children, distributed over other beasts of burden, following in single file, and the rear always brought up by the bare-legged auto-

ocrat of the household, amply turbanned and girdled with red, and with broad red shoes upon his feet.

The topic of the day was Manoli, the famous brigand, whose band had been harassing the neighbourhood for some weeks past, plundering the villagers, and murdering where their rapacity was unsatisfied. Latterly these predatory gentry have been sorely beset by the rural guards, who have gathered together from all the districts of the province, and hemmed the robbers in. Thus driven to bay, several of the band have been killed, and others wounded or taken prisoners, while Manoli himself, with a small remnant only, is playing a desperate game of hide-and-seek with the zaptiehs in the fastnesses of the mountains.

By the time our tents were struck, the camels had arrived, in strings of ten to fifteen, a solemn, long-suffering donkey at the head of each string. They pretty nearly covered the camping ground as they knelt to be relieved of their burdens, consisting chiefly of British manufactures, colonial produce, and that miscellaneous rubbish which the French call quincailleerie.

We gathered here three different sorts of wild roses,—one a dwarf monanthal; wild gladiolus, too, that would not have disgraced a garden; and a variety of less familiar blossoms that garlanded the feet of the thicket-tufts. And then we pursued our journey through the undulating forest, gaining all the while a greater elevation, till we came upon an open space, from which the wooded ground fell away on every side, and disclosed a view like a dream.

There lay before us a vast amphitheatre formed by the Ida range, enclosing a whole world of lowlier landscape. Black forest and golden field, parched upland and emerald valley, mingled in the picture; the mountain-peaks towering aloft, gleaming or darkening as the sunlight brightened, or a stray cloud veiled the toy-scene outspread below. The day was hot, and all the subjacent landscape reeled about in the smoky haze, while above it the jagged outline of the mountain stood boldly out against the sun-bleached sky.

Much more abrupt than the ascent is the declivity,—in places even precipitous,—which leads to Coomarlar, a village deeply seated in a hollow between two extended spurs of the mountain from which we had just descended. A stream trickles along the valley in the shadow of a dense grove of crania trees, while up its sides straight pines rear their heads above a tangled undergrowth of oak and maple, interwoven with wild vine and clematis. The aspect of the village is rendered seemly by neat tiled dwellings. Just beyond it, a cemetery, which was once evidently the site of some ancient temple, covers a green and well-shaped hillock, where fragments of antique columns, roughly rehewn, are accomplishing a second destiny as tombstones over many a Moslem grave.

Only undulating plains intervene between this village and the

Granicus ; but distant woods and mountains relieve the prospect, and other villages are scattered over the picture with enlivening frequency. Chan is situated on a hill, and is approached by a stone causeway, such as may be seen leading to almost every Turkish town or village, varying in length according to the importance of the place approached, and originally meant to be the commencement of a line of road, but affording no inapt illustration of the manner in which the Turks are wont to elude their own feeble good intentions ; for, save that these causeways demonstrate at once the recognition and the evasion by a paternal Government of the duty of road-making, they otherwise serve frequently only to conduct the stumbling traveller to the nearest quagmire, beyond which the spent energies of their constructors have been powerless to extend them.

Chan was in a ferment of preparation when we reached it ; for on Thursday the fair was to begin, and already Tuesday's sun was declining. The village labourers, with their arabas,—rude waggons, whose four wheels vie with each other in harshness of screech and eccentricity of demeanour,—were all carting green boughs and poles for booth-making ; boys and women, with horses and asses, brought loads of grass ; and the remnant of the populace sat in knots by the wayside looking on. There is about a mile of meadow between the village and the site, proprement dit, of the fair ; but the outposts of the fair extend to the village,—as we saw by the gaunt skeletons of booths close to the latter, waiting for the clothing of green that was to change them into bowery "chardaks." Amongst them, freshly arrived, family groups squatted, having thrown up a temporary breast-work of baskets and packages full of native wares brought for sale ; and grazing about here and there were sour-tempered, complaining camels, asses, mules, and oxen, besides swinish buffaloes wallowing in muddy pools by the fountain. The concourse of men and beasts thickened as we advanced ; but as yet all was topsy-turvy,—nothing had settled into its place.

The nucleus of the fair consists of two long double rows of sheds, which are divided off into stalls, and furnish accommodation to the élite of the dealers in foreign manufactures, who hold the first rank among the visitors. From these ranges of sheds the fair extends in long parallel streets of tents or bowers exfoliating into byways and labyrinths of waggons, and tents, and bales ; writhing out of which, you come upon another long street, and so on, till gradually you work your way out into the suburban districts, where the more aristocratic visitors pitch their camps, and beyond which, and all around, are meadows sloping to the Granicus, where during the fair hundreds of horses are tethered out to graze.

All Wednesday the fair grew ; and at sunrise on the 22nd of May, old style,—being the two thousand two hundred and second anniversary of the little affair between Alexander and Darius on the

Granius,—the Tellal, or public crier, formally opened it in the name of his Imperial Majesty Abdul Aziz Khan, Padishah of the Ottoman Empire.

Prior to the opening only a few stall-keepers had commenced operations, except the cooks, who were many, and the barber. The fittings of the cooks' stalls are primitive, but efficacious. A shallow trench is hollowed in the soil, and is lined by the more fastidious practitioners with scraps of tile set in mud : the length of the trench depends upon the extent of the culinary repertoire of the proprietor, or on the strength of his batterie de cuisine. In the trench always smoulders a fire of charcoal embers, and in a row of vessels over it there is kept up a ceaseless hissing and simmering of kibabs, and dolmas, and yaprah, and pilaff, and many savoury stews for which there is no particular name,—all of which are supplied hot from the fire to the hungry patrons of the establishment. A whole lamb, privileged with a fire to itself, cooks in privacy at the back of the bower, and the refreshment is served out in the centre. The "model" cook of the fair was an Armenian, bland and full-bodied, with ruddy calves, who hustled and reeked,—gaining his bread, if ever man did, by the sweat of his brow. A star of the first magnitude, the light of all rivals paled beside his. In vain did one, a little wizened Turk, artfully locate himself side by side with the barber, so that that artist's clients were exposed all shaving time to the appetising vapours of his laboratory. Custom he got, it is true ; but the bumper bowers were always drawn by the "model."

In a commercial point of view, it would appear that the Fair of Chan has seen its palmiest days. Old habitués, who talk of five-and-twenty years ago, say that in their day Syrian merchants came there with costly silk stuffs of Damascus ; Viennese manufacturers sent their emissaries with bales of fezzes ; and from Smyrna came caravan upon caravan freighted with the loom-work of Lancashire and Yorkshire. In those times the shopkeepers of the interior came from long distances to lay in their year's stock, looking to no other source for their supplies ; so that from three to four millions of piastres' worth of British manufactures alone used to find buyers at this gathering, while this year the total transactions of the fair did not exceed three millions, and British manufactures figure in the account for the inconsiderable sum of two hundred thousand piastres only. This falling off does not point to any real diminution in the trade, but merely to a change of practice wrought by the many lines of coasting steamers which have been established since the Crimean war. Every petty dealer who in former years never journeyed farther than his mule could carry him, now makes an annual voyage to Smyrna or Constantinople, where, amid the hot competition that reigns in all branches of trade, he finds a greater choice and better bargains than the fair in its greatest prosperity ever afforded.

The dealings in live stock take place in an enclosure at the river-end of the fair, in which are massed together in confusion half-wild cattle, buffaloes, oxen, asses, horses, and unbroken mares with foals,—presenting an array of threatening horns and hoofs which it requires some little nerve to face. The show of stock was a sorry one, owing to the large proportion of worked-out oxen brought there for sale to the butchers of Gallipoli and Chanak-Kalehse, amongst whom there was a concurrence acharnée for possession of the wretched-looking victims. In Turkey, so long as an ox has a pull in him, he is kept to the plough or the cart; by rare chance now and again an untutored steer falls into the butcher's hands; but, generally speaking, it is only when all the juices have been worked out of his tissues that the ox of these parts finds his way to the shambles: and chary indeed would be the roast beef of Old England of claiming kindred with the shrivelled morsels of fatless fibre that worry the teeth and disappoint the palates of aspirants after British fare in Asia. Nevertheless, the butchers wrangled over the haggard old carcasses with a zeal worthy of a better cause, paying as high as three pounds fifteen shillings for any animal with an apology for meat on his antiquated bones. Up to seven years of age, when only they cease growing, Turkish cattle are very symmetrical, comely animals,—usually of a silvery grey colour, shading off to black in the points,—though undersized and deficient in power and stamina, defects which are common to all classes of stock bred in the country, only excepting the hardy ponies of Roumelia. The supineness of stock-farmers, who ignore the first principles of breeding, is the prime cause of such deficiencies, which are aggravated by the absurd practice of starving and neglecting the stock in winter, during which no due provision, either for shelter or for fodder, is made for the animals set apart for breeding purposes. Hence the rapid deterioration of the Turkish horse, which is now rarely to be met with over fourteen hands high, while the average standard would fall short of thirteen hands and a half.

In the East, dealings in cattle,—as, indeed, in all other commodities,—demand a considerable exercise of lungs, patience, and diplomacy. The custom of the country is, for the buyer and seller to affect not only indifference, but abhorrence of the transaction, which each entertains solely for the “*khatir*,” or pleasure of the other. The negotiations, which are repeatedly broken off and resumed, embrace every variety of tone, from abject coaxing to rabid vituperation, till at length a crisis is reached where the uninitiated bystander would suppose that the proceedings were about to culminate in a mortal combat, but which resolves itself into complete pacification as the bargain is concluded. One of our party with bucolic tastes expended a large amount of breath and gesticulation, besides two thousand piastres in money, on the purchase of a pair of silvery little oxen. After a few preliminary skirmishings, he and the pro-

priest seated themselves on the ground face to face, and maintained for a good hour an interchange of palaver, surrounded by a chorus of bystanders, from amongst whom our bucolic friend at length emerged, flushed and limp,—but victorious. He intended at once to despatch his oxen to his farm, but the solemn warnings of the Hajee,—he of the watch and fetters,—as to the danger of exposing unprotected cattle to the evil eye, delayed their departure until amulets could be procured to guard them against such uncanny influences. The Hajee himself undertook to purchase them, and at once set off to the proper quarter of the fair, whence he presently returned provided with two charms made of coloured leather, triangularly folded, containing a parchment inscribed with certain words from the Koran, which, worn about the person, are held to render the wearer impregnable to sorcery of every kind. Binding these amulets on the foreheads of the animals,—on whom he bestowed many a *mashallah*,—the Hajee retired smiling and salaaming, well satisfied at the forethought and profound knowledge of the world which he had displayed in the above critical juncture.

After the dust of the cattle-market, a cool draught naturally suggested itself to us, as it appears to have done to the original compilers of the fair, for a range of stalls runs along from the enclosure to the main street, where pink and amber-coloured drinks are dispensed at the small charge of one halfpenny per glass. There were also itinerant vendors of the red fluid at half the tariff rate of the stalls; but this was a cheap imposture, deficient in pinkness by four shades at least, and with a mawkish flavour quite distinct from that of the genuine article,—which, indeed, is ambiguous enough, like macassar-oil diluted with cherry-bounce. On the first day we placed some faith in these beverages, for which the Turkish euphemism is sherbet, but on the second, experience prompted us to temper them with cognac,—a proceeding at which the vendor was much disgusted, casting as it did,—in his eyes,—a slur upon the hygienic properties of his liquids.

At the end of this row of stalls a baker from Roumelia had hollowed an oven in the ground, out of which he produced at a great rate bread of all shades of brownness, and white rolls, besides large circular slabs of that flat, bilious-complexioned pastry with which Levantines love to regale themselves on high-days and holidays.

Away from the baker's stretched the main street, where a crowd of loungers roamed incessantly backwards and forwards,—peasants, in holiday garb; Zeybecks, with aggressive girdles which annex half the pantaloons territory, and extend the frontiers of the waist six inches below the hips, their red caps standing a foot above their heads, and a snaky turban festooning about their ears; dervishes, in drab-coloured calpacks, swinging their shells and crying,—“Give! give!” shepherds in rough goats'-hair clothing, gathering round the

flute-stalls, each trying a flute by making ugly faces at one end till he frightens a doleful squeak out of it at the other; camel-drivers, with their heads bound in the brightest of cotton shawls; Jews and Ethiopians; petticoated Albanians, and Circassians with triple ranges of cartridges sewn to their breasts,—all wandering up and down, ever changing in grouping and colouring like the patterns in a chromatope.

Every cluster of stalls,—for the trades congregate together as in towns,—attracts its own group; but the knife stalls enjoy the most extensive custom, for the knives are of all sizes, from the murderous blade of the Zeybeck in its red wooden sheath, to the piastre-worth of soft iron in a pewter handle, with which Mussulman children damage their henna-dyed fingers. But the booth of Karagioz, the Polichinelle of the Turks, surpassed even the knife-stalls in the number of its patrons. It was perpetually crowded; one audience succeeding another so rapidly that the performance, which should have been intermittent, assumed altogether a chronic character. It was worthy of note that the spectators consisted chiefly of the elders of the people, whence it may be inferred that, unlike the infant intellect of Western Europe, that of Turkey does not appreciate the drama.

Leaving a mass of puckered faces grinning at the puppets, we came upon the portion of the fair set apart for women, where all the articles of native manufacture are sold,—coarse home-spun cloths of cotton and wool; knitted stockings; towels, coarse and fine, some embroidered with many-coloured beasts and plants; besides a host of other products of the distaffs and looms of the Turkish women, far too various for description.

And here, reaching the limits of the fair, having wasted all our pocket-money in fairings,—knives, towels, flutes, and coffee-pots, besides several pink drinks, we wandered back to our camp; and first refreshing ourselves with a bathe in the shady pools of the Granicus, took horse, and, following the sun in his westward course, reached our old bivouac in the forest; whence, next morning, we pursued our homeward journey, tracking the winding Rhodius to the sea.

ON RAILWAY ECONOMY.

THE difficulties and dangers which encompassed the late expedition to Abyssinia brought out most vividly how much we owe to modern means of inland communication. The distance, from the point of debarkation of the troops to Magdala, was not great; but what préparations had to be made! what expense in mules, camels, and necessities of all kinds! what fear of being surprised by the rain! The road was rugged and steep. The route was uncertain. The march was irksome and dangerous. Nowhere was the country accessible. Nowhere had civilisation left its indelible traces,—the open road, the railway, or the telegraph. It was easy to lead British and French troops by railway and shipping to the Crimea; but the journey from Balaklava to Sebastopol,—a few short miles,—how fatal did it prove! And we may well picture to our mind, how it was in this very country, when, unprovided with roads, railways, or canals, industry was neglected, the riches of the earth were unexplored, and counties, now teeming with population, were alone and segregated from every centre of civilisation and commerce. But take now a map of England; see how it is intersected by means of communication of all kinds. Nay, go further; for all boundaries are obliterated. Imagine the narrow channel which divides us from France or Belgium connected by a well-laid cast-iron tube, full of passengers, in the depth of the ocean; see them travelling over France, penetrating the wonderful Alps, passing the Bosphorus by a bridge, and forward by railway down the Euphrates, and round the Persian Gulf, never stopping till, almost dry-shod, they land in the golden cities of India and China. It is recorded that Cicero received at Rome, on the 28th September, a letter dated in Britain the 1st of the same month, and it was a wonderful feat, when we consider the passage by sea and the crossing of the Alps, or the troublesome circuit necessary in order to avoid them. Gibbon also tells us that Cesarius, a magistrate of rank in the time of Theodosius, went post from Antioch to Constantinople. He began his journey at night; was in Cappadocia, 165 miles from Antioch, the ensuing evening; and arrived at Constantinople the sixth day about noon; the whole distance being 725 Roman, or 665 English miles. But what are these achievements as compared with our everyday performances, when we can, with the rapidity of lightning, communicate our thoughts to the farthest quarters of the earth, seas

and oceans notwithstanding? Communication by land and by water, by rail and by steam, by letter and by telegram, has indeed become most easy; and, with a velocity altogether unprecedented, it seems as if we could almost annihilate both time and space.

It was long before railways began to be understood and appreciated. The invention had for years been made known, yet it remained dormant and useless. And when the project was fully started, how incredulous every one was,—what prejudices, what obstructions, what opposition, had to be met with and overcome! Would it be practicable, or useful, or safe, to travel at such a speed? And how much mischief was apprehended to arise from railways? What damages to the householders adjoining the lines! Horses would no longer be of any use. Oats and hay would prove unsaleable commodities. Country inns would be ruined. The boilers would burst, and passengers would be blown to atoms. Happily the unfounded apprehensions of the ignorant were laughed at and unheeded. The wonderful skill of Stephenson was a match for every engineering obstacle, and the experiment was tried, and succeeded, by the triumphant opening of the Manchester and Liverpool Railway, on the 15th September, 1830. Alas! that the joy of the day should have been marred by the unhappy accident which suddenly cut off the great Huskisson. By that great achievement, a new era of locomotion was inaugurated, and from that day forth the railway superseded all other means of communication. At one time fears were entertained that we might not be able to withdraw so many millions of floating capital for the purpose of their being sunk in iron ways. But all such fears speedily vanished at the sight of the enormous development of wealth. More lines became necessary. The cry came from the mining districts. It was re-echoed from the shipping ports, and even the agricultural counties implored for them. Thus railway extension was never materially checked. In 1834 there were but 200 miles of railway opened. Now, we have nearly 15,000 miles of railway, the capital authorised being £642,853,408.* What energy, what enterprise, what resources, are exhibited by figures like these! And what revolution, what progress, what untold benefits do they indicate! The railway is a theme for economic studies, not only for what it has achieved as an auxiliary to civilisation and progress, but as a commercial enterprise in itself of a most interesting character. In former days, it was a great emperor or a great commander that ordered the formation of roads. It was with a view of sending his legions to Gaul or Germania that Cæsar made what have ever since remained monu-

	Capital authorized.
* 1801—1825	£1,263,100
1826—1845	153,453,807
1846—1867	488,136,501
	<hr/> <hr/> £642,853,408

ments of his energy,—the great Roman roads. It was to facilitate the invasion of Italy that Napoleon I. made the road over the Simplon. But now we have the strange phenomenon of commercial companies becoming constructors of railways, and for purposes of gain. In their favour, the State and the commune appear to have abdicated the important office of providing the necessary means of communication.

Bentham, in his "Constitutional Code for all Nations," laid down, that among the high Ministers of State, there should be one of internal communications, and it is generally admitted that the maintenance of the road is as much the function of Government as the coining of money, prescribing a set of standard weights and measures, making or improving harbours, or building lighthouses. No one, even the most jealous of State interference, ever objected to it as an improper exercise of the powers of Government. The road is a public highway, and the State should certainly guarantee its free use to the public. If necessary, let it impose a tax for the purpose, but let it be a common property, and reserved free from all monopolies. Why, then, not have the railways, which have in a great measure superseded the road, placed in the hands of the State? Why make any exception in their favour? The answer is very simple. The State has not made them, and but for the companies we should not have them even now. But would it be better were railways managed for the State and by the State? Or are we rather content that they should remain the property of private individuals, and managed for their own benefit? The Act of 1844 provided that, after the end of twenty-one years, any railway shall be liable to be purchased for a sum equal to twenty-five years' purchase of the average annual divisible profits for three years before such purchase, provided these profits shall equal or exceed 10 per cent. on the capital, and if not, that the railway company shall be at liberty to claim any further sum for anticipated profits, to be fixed by arbitration. But though the time has elapsed when we could give effect to this provision, nothing has been done. The question that the State should acquire the right of property in all the railways of the country, was deliberately propounded before the Royal Commissioners on Railways in 1867, and was most strongly advocated by Captain Galt, Sir Rowland Hill, and Mr. Edwin Chadwick. They argued that under the management of the State we might have a large reduction of fares, great additional postal facilities, and more uniformity of management; whilst shareholders, who have reason to be dissatisfied with the present competition, might be glad to exchange their shares or debentures for Consols, even although the rate of interest should be somewhat lower. But the Royal Commission negatived the proposal, and reported that it is inexpedient at present to subvert the policy which has hitherto been adopted of leaving the construction and management of railways

to the free enterprise of the people, under such conditions as Parliament may think fit to impose for the general welfare of the public. And with these conclusions we entirely agree. In truth, apart from the great difficulty of a financial character which would attend such a purchase, it is quite evident that the State would scarcely be able to cope with the many exigencies of such management, whilst the difficulty of finding lessees to manage such enormous undertakings, the danger of shifting the responsibility of management, and the doubtful character of any measure for cheapening the fares, are of themselves sufficient reasons for discouraging the adoption of the proposal.

The example of foreign countries is produced in favour of State management of railways. We must remember, however, that when they began to construct their railways the problem was solved ; their practicability had been established, their modus operandi was before them, they could take advantage of all our experience. And it was a necessity of the case with them that the railways should be undertaken by the Government, since the required capital would never otherwise have been forthcoming. Here, on the contrary, there was no need for any such action. Whilst the Government had no means for entering into any such undertakings, British enterprise was quite sufficient for every exigency. In reality, not only the British railways, but most of the foreign railways, owe their existence to this country. British capital, British engineers, British locomotives, British iron, British coals, are all over the world. What excuse was there for the British Government to undertake any share of such works ? But let us see what is the relation of foreign Governments with the railways.

In France, the Government has done much for the railways. It has laid down the lines, it has constructed the earthwork, it has advanced money, it has guaranteed the interest; and consequently by the first condition of such assistance, the companies have no real or landed right in the railways ; the ownership of them is in the State, and upon the expiration of the time for which the railways have been conceded, they become the property of the State, and the Government then assumes all control. In Belgium, the principal lines belong to the State. In Prussia, it is the same. In Austria, the Government guarantees a certain income to the shareholders on the capital they invested in the undertaking, the guarantee being granted for ninety years, that being the term of the duration of the privilege, after which the railways, with all the immovable appurtenances, devolve to the State. We need not, however, go far away for examples of State action, where a necessity was clearly established. In India the British Government aided the construction of railways by guaranteeing to railway companies a certain rate of interest for ninety-nine years upon the capital expended with the approval of the Government upon their undertaking. The land required for the

railway, and the works connected therewith, were given to the companies, free of expense, by the Government. But at the expiration of the ninety-nine years, the land will revert to the Government; and if the railway companies have not availed themselves of the power of surrendering before that period arrives, the works also will lapse to the Government, who will purchase the stock of engines, carriages, &c., at a valuation. In some cases, therefore, the Government became the constructor of railways; in others it aided private enterprise with a view to their construction; whilst in this country, where no such necessity existed, the Government have done no more than watch over the right of property, and secure, as far as possible, the interest of the public. We are not prepared, indeed, to say that private management is in every particular superior to State management. As in all countries in which the State has undertaken the railways, it has laid down as a basis that it would not lose by the transaction, and has thought it right to act in precisely the same manner as any private company would act, State management, with all its resources, may well furnish us lessons of great value. But that will not affect the principle of the question. All we can say is, that it is well to test the British and continental methods by results, and that as we have a long experience of both systems, we may adopt the best of both. The question is of enormous importance, and we have many valuable facts which may offer us a wise direction. What do we gain, and what do we lose, by having the railways in the hands of private companies rather than in the hands of the State?

As a natural result of the freedom of action allowed in this country in all industrial undertakings, we now possess a much larger number of miles of railway, in proportion to area, than any other country. Whilst France has 1 mile of railway to every 26 square miles of territory, and Austria and other countries 1 mile to every 60 or 80 miles of area, England has 1 mile of railway to less than 6. In continental countries, where the Government gave themselves to the construction of railways, lines connecting the different localities were selected quite as much from political or strategic motives, as from commercial and economic. Competition in those cases was almost unknown, and there was but little danger of an excessive mileage of railways. Here it was different. Looked at from a distance, it might seem needless to have two lines of railways to and from the same localities, and we might be disposed to lament the enormous waste of duplicate lines running almost parallel at intervals; but the advantage of the line does not depend solely upon the resources of the points of arrival and departure, but upon the traffic which falls into the line from adjacent localities. And of such traffic the localities themselves are the best judges. Errors have doubtless been made. Here the projectors were too sanguine of success; there the owner of an estate, or of a mine, urged a line which the public did

not demand; and there engineers or speculators promoted undertakings which could never be profitable; but with all these mishaps and shortcomings the public largely benefited, and the means of transport, so important to commerce and prosperity, have been immensely multiplied.

Would that we could say that the proprietors of railways derived themselves sufficient returns from their investments. Any golden dreams which may have once fed their imagination have long since been dissipated. Those who took money from trade and manufacture, in the hope of gaining greater profits by railway investment, have, ere this, bitterly repented the change. There was, indeed, an enormous traffic in shares, and fortunes have been won and lost, but now the returns are wonderfully small. In 1867, with a capital paid up, and debenture loans outstanding amounting to £502,000,000, the net receipts amounted to £19,631,047, giving a dividend of just 3·91 per cent. The rate of dividends has diminished instead of increasing of late years, and it is not very creditable to British enterprise, that whilst the Northern of France line pays 10·4 per cent., and the Belgian State railways pay 7·064 per cent., the South-Eastern Railway Company in this country should pay only 4·6375 per cent. By what means the immense amount of capital now invested in railways may be rendered more fruitful, it is difficult to divine. It is not only that the cost of construction per mile has been higher in this country than in any other, but strange irregularities have been allowed in the management which could not fail to prove disastrous to the railway interest. In the first instance the investors of capital do not stand on the same footing. An unfortunate distinction is made between ordinary capital and preferential capital, the proportion being 46 per cent. of the one, and 54 per cent. of the other, and by a strange arrangement, justified by no other cause than by the extreme need of getting money at any price, the interest of the original investors was sacrificed and set aside in favour of subsequent investors. Instead of dividing the profits, share and share alike, in many cases the original investor,—he who started the work, who helped it to go forward,—literally gets nothing, and the newcomer,—shrewder and more calculating,—gets the whole. Not fewer than 148 railway lines,—viz., 104 in England, 14 in Scotland, and 30 in Ireland,—returned absolutely nil for dividends on the ordinary capital, while for the preferential capital and debentures, from 5 to 7 per cent. were set aside. Connected with the issue of shares, revelations of a most suspicious character have often been made which have thrown considerable shade on railway morals and railway policy, and it is quite clear that the wrongdoings of the few have resulted to the disadvantage of the many. This is an evil which is, we fear, beyond remedy.

The passenger railway traffic is something extraordinary. In 1867,

as many as 288,000,000 passengers travelled by railways in the United Kingdom. If the Russians are great travellers abroad, the English certainly are great travellers at home. Abundant facilities are afforded for going to and fro, and they are taken advantage of largely. In England there were 12 travellers to every one of the population. In France only $2\frac{1}{2}$. In England there were 25,000 passengers per mile of railway. In France only 9,000. On the Northern of France Railway the average number of passengers per mile was 15,320. On the Belgian State Railway the proportion was 20,175; and on the South-Eastern in this country, 51,576. The number of passengers, however, is not a safe guidance without the average number of miles travelled over. Ten or twenty years ago there was but little traffic for short distances. Now it is immense. In the Metropolitan Railway, for instance, only five miles long, there were, in 1867, 22,000,000 passengers, or an average of 4,400,000 passengers per mile. The London and North-Western, with 1,300 miles, had 26,000,000 passengers, or 20,000 passengers per mile. When railways were first introduced, a passenger was indeed a bona fide traveller, and for business purposes, very few travelling then on pleasure. Now, as passengers we include not only the traveller, but the pleasure-seeker, the excursionist, and more especially the multitude who, living at short distances from the great centres of business, travel often, but give but little to the railway. This, however, greatly affects the receipts of railways. Whilst in the Metropolitan the receipts averaged only $1\frac{1}{2}d.$ per head, in the London and North-Western they averaged 1s. 11d. per head of the passengers. And we must remember that valuable as the traffic in short distances is, it is not by that that a railway of any length can exist. It is, therefore, an important question to ask, Are there sufficient facilities given for travelling long distances? It is said that travelling is now very cheap. It is not, however, by any comparison with coach travelling that we must test this cheapness. The proper test is the relation of the expenditure to the object to be achieved, and unless the travelling expenses, including not only what is given to the railway, but what must be given to the hotel and other incidental expenses, are low and reasonable, the journey is not undertaken, the business is transacted by post, or the pleasure-trip is deferred or abandoned. Why is it that so large a proportion as 62 per cent. of the passengers travel third class? They are not all working men or women. The third-class compartment is a democratic institution, with Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité at the top of it. Men of all classes, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, townspeople and countryfolks, are all found there,—some because they bona fide belong to the tiers état, but many more because their resources do not admit of paying more, or the object of their errands could not bear a greater expenditure. When we travel we make up our mind to a certain amount of fatigue and dis-

comfort, and the advantage of a cushion is not worth the difference of fares between the first and the third class. It would be kind in the railway company to soften a little the seat of third-class travellers; but for the acquisition of that extra comfort very few will pay double. But what if even the third class is comparatively dear, or omits to give the needed accommodation at the time wanted, or is provided by a train travelling at too slow a rate for the achievement of the object in view? Many a journey is thus abandoned in consequence. In foreign countries railway fares are considerably lower than in England for all classes, and third-class accommodation is better and more frequent, there being scarcely a train but has accommodation for all classes of the community.* It is alleged that in this country return-tickets are issued more generally than abroad, and usually on more liberal terms; that the regulations as regards luggage are more liberal; and that the speed of trains in Great Britain is somewhat higher than on the Continent. But in these particulars the advantages are by no means so preponderating in our favour as they seem; and if they were, they would not answer the question as to the policy of railway companies in charging higher fares and giving less facilities for travelling in whatever class one desires, than are charged and granted in other countries. Nor does it pay. In the interest of the railway companies themselves something must be done to attract more passengers, and induce a still greater disposition to travel. The feeling that this is so accounts for the many schemes lately put forth for a complete reform in railway economy. One of these proposals is that instead of the numerous and varying fares now charged throughout the country, we should follow the penny-postage plan, and charge one uniform and very low fare, regardless of distances, say: 3d. for one course, for third-class passengers; 6d. a course for second-class;

* Mr. Galt, in his evidence, gave the following as a comparative table of the fares charged on the Continent and in this country:—

	Average fares per 100 miles.			
	1st class. s. d.	2nd class. s. d.	3rd class. s. d.	4th class. s. d.
Belgium . . .	10 3 ⁽¹⁾ . .	5 6 . .	3 0	
Spain . . .	11 9 . .	8 10 . .	5 9	
Italy . . .	10 6 . .	7 11 . .	4 0	
France . . .	13 4 . .	10 0 . .	7 0	
Russia . . .	13 0 . .	10 0 . .	6 6 . .	4 0
Switzerland .	13 6 . .	9 4 . .	6 9	
Denmark . . .	13 0 . .	8 6 . .	6 0	
Austria . . .	13 0 . .	7 6 . .	5 9	
Norway . . .	13 4 . .	9 0 . .	4 6	
Holland . . .	14 0 . .	11 2 . .	7 0	
Portugal . . .	14 2 . .	11 0 . .	6 9	
Prussia . . .	14 5 . .	10 10 . .	6 6	
United Kingdom	16 8 ¹ . .	12 6 . .	8 4	

(1) As corrected in evidence.

and 1s. a course for first-class.* And it is calculated that by that plan the number of passengers would be increased six times, and the receipts would increase from £15,000,000 to £95,000,000. We will not attempt to test the accuracy of this calculation or the soundness of such deductions, but may say that it does appear to us that the measure is far too bold to admit of easy and practical application. The analogy of the Post Office is adduced as a precedent in point. Let us see how far that will assist us. Before the penny post was introduced the number of letters carried was about 80,000,000. The year after, the number of letters was doubled; four years after, it trebled; eight years after, it quadrupled; thirteen years after, it quintupled; and now, after thirty years, with trade immensely expanded, the letters are more than nine times as many as in 1838, the proportion of letters to population having increased from 3 to 26 per head. And how was the revenue affected by it? In 1838 the net revenue from the Post Office was £1,659,000. On the introduction of the penny-postage, the net revenue was reduced to £500,000. Since then, it has recovered much; yet, in 1868 it amounted only to £1,416,000 or £200,000 less than the revenue of 1838, under the higher rates.† The principal difficulty of trying as an experiment any considerable reduction in railway fares and rates is the immense annual expenditure to be met, and the danger that for several years there might be a considerable loss. The proposer doubtless argues that the Government should first purchase all the lines. That, in fact, is with all such schemes a condition precedent; but I am not satisfied that the Government could or should risk any large amount of revenue for such a purpose. Without being dogmatic, we may perhaps urge that the companies themselves should agree to introduce a uniform mileage fare, 20 per cent. at least lower than the present rates, throughout all the railways; and that they should afford at the same time adequate facilities by all trains, whether ordinary or express, to third-class passengers. If this be attempted, they will see whether the result will justify a further and still bolder reform. To encourage railway travelling, however, it will not be sufficient simply to lower the fares. Care must be taken also to lessen the danger of accidents. A

* Mr. Galt's proposal was much more moderate. In his evidence before the Royal Commissioners he suggested the following fares:—

Express.	Fast trains.	Ordinary trains.	Excursion trains.
1st class 2d.	1½	½ per mile.	4 miles for 1 penny.
2nd " 1½	½	½ "	6 " "
3rd " —	½	½ "	10 " "

† The net amount of revenue in 1868 is scarcely comparable with that of 1838, the whole cost of conveyance of mails by private ships and by packets being now charged on the Post Office. The gross revenue which in 1838 was £2,346,278, decreased in 1840 to £1,359,466, but has since increased to £4,566,882 in 1868.

railway accident is a great disaster. A fire stimulates every one to insure. A railway crash makes every one think twice before he commits himself to a journey. And yet the liability to accidents is very small. In the year ended 31st December, 1867, there were 209 persons killed and 795 injured, or 1,004 in all, and of these some suffered from their own misconduct or want of caution, and some, from causes beyond their own control. Taking no account of this distinction, which is, however important, what amount of danger does this number represent? The persons injured or killed were in the proportion of 1 to every 286,000 passengers. Now, in reality, we incur more danger of being upset by a cab, or an omnibus, or a coach, than of being injured or killed by a railway. Yet it is the interest and the duty of railway companies to impress this sense of security in the mind of the nation, and every precaution they can take for that purpose is so much added to the benefit of railway property.

But the railways are not only our diligences and stage-coaches. They are our carriers of minerals, goods, and cattle. In one single year, in 1867, the railways of the United Kingdom carried 99,000,000 tons of coals, 46,000,000 tons of merchandise, 3,500,000 cattle, nearly 10,000,000 sheep, 2,500,000 pigs, beside horses, dogs, carriages, parcels, and a thousand other things. The goods traffic of railway companies is greater than the passenger traffic. In 1849 the proportion of receipts was 53·17 per cent. from passenger traffic, and 46·87 per cent. from goods. In 1867 the proportion was 45·43 per cent. from passengers, and 54·57 per cent. from goods; and whilst during that period the passenger traffic increased 185 per cent., the goods traffic increased 289 per cent., so much have railways and free trade promoted the productive power of this country! But grievous complaints are made that the railways do not afford all the facilities required for the conveyance of merchandise, and that the rates are in many cases too high. Cheapness of transport is certainly a most important element in the competition which our manufacturers have to sustain with France, Belgium, Germany, and other countries. If we have to pay dearer for going to the market to buy or sell, and dearer also for the transport of the raw material from the shipping port to the factory, and vice versa, of manufactured goods from the factory to the shipping ports, surely our prices must be higher than theirs. And what is injurious to the interest of trade is as injurious to the prosperity of railways. The Royal Commissioners reported that, for the great bulk of goods traffic, the English rates are lower than the French. But in many cases the very articles which come most in competition with this country are carried in France at considerably cheaper rates. Cotton wool, from Liverpool to Manchester, pays 10s. per ton; the corresponding rate in France is 8s. Bar iron pays here, for that same distance, 7s. 6d., there 5s. 5d. per ton. The goods rates in Belgium and

Germany are also considerably lower. In truth, the Railway Commissioners were not satisfied with the present rates, and they recommended that when a railway company comes forward for additional powers, Parliament should take that opportunity of revising the maximum rate of conveyance. But we cannot afford waiting to deal with the railway companies singly as occasions present themselves. The public has a right to demand that the interests of trade be not sacrificed by railway mismanagement; and it cannot be tolerated that the rates of transport should be higher here than on the continent. The anomalous diversities in the charges by the different lines produce also a world of trouble and uncertainty, in many cases most injurious to certain localities. To give one or two illustrations of this grievance:—A cask of sugar from Glasgow to Manchester pays 7*s.* 2*d.* per ton per hundred miles, from London to Manchester pays 14*s.* 7*d.*, and from Liverpool to Manchester £1 5*s.* 6*d.* per ton per hundred miles. Can there be greater inequality and injustice? The rates to Manchester are said to be 25 per cent. more than to Oldham, and the charges from Matlock to London, passing through Derby, are less than from Matlock to Derby.

But what shall we say of the multiplicity of companies? A new territorial division has been introduced by the railways. This province belongs to the London and North-Western, that to the Great Western, that other to the Midland, and that other to the South-Eastern, South-Western, or Great Northern. Nor does it end there. It was stated by Mr. Chadwick that a small parcel sent from the Land's End to May, near Thurso, must be conveyed by nineteen different instrumentalities, viz., three foot messengers, one mail cart, three mail coaches, one mail, one boat, and ten railways. In many cases the railway time-tables of the different companies do not agree, and the greatest trouble and perplexity arise from it. What we should do under such circumstances without the railway clearing-house, it is difficult to say. We are indebted to that institution for the fact that, notwithstanding all these inconveniences of different rates and different companies, passengers are booked through at all principal stations, and conveyed to their destinations without change of carriages; that horses and cattle are sent through without change of conveyance; and that goods are in the same way carried through without being either shifted or reassorted. By the arrangements in force the companies respectively pay a fixed rate per mile for such carriages and waggons not their own property as they may use, and a further sum per day by way of fine or demurrage for detention, if the carriage be kept beyond a prescribed length of time. For instance, in sending a bale of goods to Edinburgh, the whole fare is paid at the Great Northern Station, but the Great Northern is only entitled to the cost of the transport up to a certain distance. Beyond that another company enters in its

rights, and beyond that another, and the amount thus respectively due is adjusted at the clearing-house. Instead, moreover, of discharging the goods at the end of the Great Northern territory, to lade them again in the waggons of the next company, the same waggons are allowed to go through, and whilst the company charges for the transport through its line, it allows to the Great Northern a given amount for the loan of the waggons. On an average, each consignment of goods goes through three railways, and each passenger travels over 2,58 railways, and the total mileage for which a charge was made in the year ending 30th June, 1869, was 301,760,000 miles.

The working expenditure of railway companies is very large, and it seems to be on an increasing ratio. In 1860 it absorbed 47 per cent. of the receipts; in 1867 it took 58 per cent. We might imagine, that an ironway would require but little repair, but it is quite otherwise. The wear and tear are very great, and even iron gives way to constant friction. Nor is the construction of a railway cheaper now than it was twenty years ago. There may be less competition and less gambling, but land is more valuable. Iron is dearer, labour is more costly. And how can any saving be effected so long as it is necessary to carry thirty-three tons of load for every ton of passengers, 70 per cent. of the weight carried being dead weight? It is a great drawback on railway economy, that whilst by an omnibus the paying and the non-paying load balance each other, by the railway the non-paying constitutes 95 per cent. of the entire weight. This is a problem which requires solution, and whether it be by the steam carriage of M. Fairlie or by any other method, we do trust that great economy may yet be attained in this important particular. The time has arrived when the railway companies should come to a greater accord as to unity of management; and I do not see why, in these days of congresses and association, the companies should not come together and deliberate on the measures which they should take for their own interest and the public good.*

The influence of railways on the material and moral interests of the kingdom has been very considerable. Agriculture gained immensely by the easy and more economic transport of manure, cattle, sheep, and farm produce. A piece of land was recently considered quite

* Some idea of the influence of railways in cheapening goods may be formed by comparing the cost of carriage before and after the opening of railways between London and Birmingham:—

	Rates by Canal, collected and delivered. Before the opening of Railways.		Rates by Railway, collected and delivered. 1866.		
	1866.		1866.		
	s.	d.	s.	d.	
Hardwares	60	0	per ton. . . .	27 6	per ton.
Sugar, raw	50	0	"	21 8	"
Tea	50	0	"	32 6	"
Glass	70	0	"	27 6	"

unproductive. A railway went near it, and immediately a bed of asparagus was planted, which, being, rendered available for the London market, raised the value of the land to £10 an acre. A railway was recently constructed in the Highlands of Scotland, and forthwith their enormous woods were rendered most valuable. As an example of the way in which the railway benefits the farmer and increases public wealth, see how it acts on the transport of fat stock to the London market. Formerly, when several days were occupied in driving to London, a sheep was found on the average to have lost seven pounds weight, and bullocks twenty-eight pounds. This difference in weight was waste, entirely lost to everybody. Now nearly the whole amount finds its way into the market, as the stock are put into the trucks in the morning and reach London in the afternoon, without fatigue. In former days it was necessary that the metropolis should be near a river, for facility of communication, as London on the Thames, Rome on the Tiber, Paris on the Seine. But now we are no longer dependent on the river for provisions. Coals arrive by land as well as by sea. The railway brings meat daily from Aberdeen, fish from Yarmouth, and farm produce from all parts of the country, nay, even from the Continent. Of the increase of commerce in late years we are all aware; and, certainly, if free trade has done much, the railway has done more, in enabling us to supply all nations with our produce and manufactures. Let us remember what saving of time the railways produce in the transit of merchandise. Millions were formerly lying idle, locked up on the roads, which are now at once liberated for other uses. In days gone by it took a long time to negotiate a business, whether personally or by correspondence. Now it is done in an instant. Whole cargoes of merchandise are bought and sold by telegram. And, as business multiplies, so profits and wealth increase apace. Small profits and quick returns is a maxim of railway life. The saving of time and expense attained by railway travelling is something extraordinary. There were in 1867, as we have seen, 288,000,000 passengers in the British railways. Taking that at an average, they travelled fifteen miles each; and assuming that whilst by coach they could only have travelled at the rate of seven miles an hour, by railway they travelled at the rate of thirty miles, their saving in time would be not less than 473,000,000 hours. Calculate that time saved at the rate of at least 6d. an hour, or 6s. a day of twelve hours, and you have a saving of upwards of £11,000,000 a year, to say nothing of the enormous saving in hotel expenses which quick travelling produces. And what shall we say of the carriage of goods? Where could we find horses sufficient to carry the 150,000,000 tons of coals and goods, and the millions of cattle and sheep? A horse can at most work eight hours a day; an engine may work twenty-four hours. And think of the saving in the cost

of transport by steam as compared with horse power. The Paris Omnibus Company carried, in 1868, 113,000,000 passengers, and the expenditure incurred was upwards of £2,000,000; being at the rate of 4*1/4*d. per head. The Metropolitan Railway Company carried, in 1867, 22,000,000 passengers, at the cost of £90,000, or at the rate of less than 1d. per head, besides carrying 75,000 tons of coals and minerals and 22,000 tons of merchandise. In every way, in fact, the material interests of the country have been immensely promoted by railways. And what of morals and intelligence? Look at the enormous number of newspapers sold at all railway-stations. See how many volumes are sold and read! What railway literature has been put forth! What habits of punctuality have been introduced! Who, indeed, can estimate the benefit to mind and intelligence derived by the millions who traverse the length and breadth of the land? A railway-carriage full of people is a great school, and we need not be philosophers or moralists in order to learn many a solid lesson from the flow and ebb of human life passing before us as we move from station to station. And do not the railways subserve many a purpose of love and mercy? How speedily may an absent member of a family proceed to perform the last act of affection to a dying relative! How prompt may be the relief in case of disaster! How much are the bonds of friendship and relationship cemented by the visits of friends whom business and fate keep distant from one another! For thousands of benefits,—economical, social, and political,—we are indebted to the railways. But for them no British Association, and no Social Science Congresses would ever have been held. But for them no international exhibitions of art and industry could have been celebrated. Civilisation owes to them one of its main incentives. By them knowledge and science are making enormous conquests. May we add, that by their instrumentality the days are hastening when the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea!

AN EDITOR'S TALES.

No. III.

JOSEPHINE DE MONTMORENCI.

THE little story which we are about to relate refers to circumstances which occurred some years ago, and we desire, therefore, that all readers may avoid the fault of connecting the personages of the tale,—either the Editor who suffered so much, and who behaved, we think, so well, or the ladies with whom he was concerned,—with any editor or with any ladies known to such readers either personally or by name. For though the story as told is a true story, we who tell it have used such craft in the telling, that we defy the most astute to fix the time or to recognise the characters. It will be sufficient if the curious will accept it as a fact that at some date since magazines became common in the land, a certain editor, sitting in his office, came upon the perusal of the following letter, addressed to him by name;—

" 19, King-Charles Street,
" 1st May, 18—.

" DEAR SIR,

" I think that literature needs no introduction, and, judging of you by the character which you have made for yourself in its paths, I do not doubt but you will feel as I do. I shall therefore write to you without reserve. I am a lady not possessing that modesty which should make me hold a low opinion of my own talents, and equally free from that feeling of self-betrayal which induces so many to speak humbly while they think proudly of their own acquirements. Though I am still young, I have written much for the press, and I believe I may boast that I have sometimes done so successfully. Hitherto I have kept back my name, but I hope soon to be allowed to see it on the title-page of a book which shall not shame me.

" My object in troubling you is to announce the fact, agreeable enough to myself, that I have just completed a novel in three volumes, and to suggest to you that it should make its first appearance to the world in the pages of the magazine under your control. I will frankly tell you that I am not myself fond of this mode of publication; but Messrs. X., Y., Z., of Paternoster Row, with whom you are doubtless acquainted, have assured me that such will be the better course. In these matters one is still terribly subject to the tyranny of the publishers, who surely of all cormorants are the most

greedy, and of all tyrants are the most arrogant. Though I have never seen you, I know you too well to suspect for a moment that my words will ever be repeated to my respectable friends in the Row.

"Shall I wait upon you with my MS.,—or will you call for it? Or perhaps it may be better that I should send it to you. Young ladies should not run about,—even after editors; and it might be so probable that I should not find you at home. Messrs. X., Y., and Z. have read the MS.—or more probably the young man whom they keep for the purpose has done so,—and the nod of approval has been vouchsafed. Perhaps this may suffice; but if a second examination be needful, the work is at your service.

"Yours faithfully, and in hopes of friendly relations,

"JOSEPHINE DE MONTMORENCI.

"I am English, though my unfortunate name will sound French in your ears."

For facility in the telling of our story we will call this especial editor Mr. Brown. Mr. Brown's first feeling on reading the letter was decidedly averse to the writer. But such is always the feeling of editors to would-be contributors, though contributions are the very food on which an editor must live. But Mr. Brown was an unmarried man, who loved the rustle of feminine apparel, who delighted in the brightness of a woman's eye when it would be bright for him, and was not indifferent to the touch of a woman's hand. As editors go, or went then, he knew his business, and was not wont to deluge his pages with weak feminine ware in return for smiles and flattering speeches,—as editors have done before now; but still he liked an adventure, and was perhaps afflicted by some slight flaw of judgment, in consequence of which the words of pretty women found with him something of preponderating favour. Who is there that will think evil of him because it was so?

He read the letter a second time, and did not send that curt, heart-rending answer which is so common to editors,—“The Editor's compliments and thanks, but his stock of novels is at present so great that he cannot hope to find room for the work which has been so kindly suggested.” Of King-Charles Street, Brown could not remember that he had ever heard, and he looked it out at once in the Directory. There was a King-Charles Street in Camden Town, at No. 19 of which street it was stated that a Mr. Puffle resided. But this told him nothing. Josephine de Montmorenci might reside with Mrs. Puffle in Camden Town, and yet write a good novel,—or be a very pretty girl. And there was a something in the tone of the letter which made him think that the writer was no ordinary person. She wrote with confidence. She asked no favour. And then she declared that Messrs. X., Y., Z., with whom Mr. Brown was intimate,

had read and approved her novel. Before he answered the note he would call in the Row and ask a question or two.

He did call, and saw Z. Mr. Z. remembered well that the MS. had been in their house. He rather thought that X., who was out of town, had seen Miss Montmorenci,—perhaps on more than one occasion. The novel had been read, and,—well, Mr. Z. would not quite say approved; but it had been thought that there was a good deal in it. “I think I remember X. telling me that she was an uncommon pretty young woman,” said Z.,—“and there is some mystery about her. I didn’t see her myself, but I am sure there was a mystery.” Z. himself was an old family man of nearly sixty, whereas X. was known to be over seventy. Mr. Brown made up his mind that he would, at any rate, see the MS.

He felt disposed to go at once to Camden Town, but still had fears that in doing so he might seem to make himself too common. There are so many things of which an editor is required to think! It is almost essential that they who are ambitious of serving under him should believe that he is enveloped in MSS. from morning to night,—that he cannot call an hour his own,—that he is always bringing out that periodical of his in a frenzy of mental exertion,—that he is to be approached only with difficulty,—and that a call from him is a visit from a god. Mr. Brown was a Jupiter willing enough on occasions to go a little out of his way after some literary Leda, or even on behalf of a Danae desirous of a price for her compositions;—but he was obliged to acknowledge to himself that the occasion had not as yet arisen. So he wrote to the young lady as follows;—

“Office of the Olympus Magazine,
“4th May, 18—.

“The Editor presents his compliments to Miss de Montmorenci, and will be very happy to see her MS. Perhaps she will send it to the above address. The Editor has seen Mr. Z., of Paternoster Row, who speaks highly of the work. A novel, however, may be very clever and yet hardly suit a magazine. Should it be accepted by the ‘Olympus,’ some time must elapse before it appears. The Editor would be very happy to see Miss de Montmorenci if it would suit her to call any Friday between the hours of two and three.”

When the note was written Mr. Brown felt that it was cold;—but then it behoves an editor to be cold. A gushing editor would ruin any publication within six months. Young women are very nice; pretty young women are especially nice; and of all pretty young women, clever young women who write novels are perhaps as nice as any;—but to an Editor they are dangerous. Mr. Brown was at this time about forty, and had had his experiences. The letter was cold, but he was afraid to make it warmer. It was sent;—and

when he received the following answer, it may fairly be said that his editorial hair stood on end.

"DEAR MR. BROWN,

"I hate you and your compliments. That sort of communication means nothing, and I won't send you my MS. unless you are more in earnest about it. I know the way in which rolls of paper are shoved into pigeon-holes and left there till they are musty, while the writers' hearts are being broken. My heart may be broken some day, but not in that way.

"I won't come to you between two and three on Friday. It sounds a great deal too like a doctor's appointment, and I don't think much of you if you are only at your work one hour in the week. Indeed, I won't go to you at all. If an interview is necessary you can come here. But I don't know that it will be necessary.

"Old X. is a fool and knows nothing about it. My own approval is to me very much more than his. I don't suppose he'd know the inside of a book if he saw it. I have given the very best that is in me to my work, and I know that it is good. Even should you say that it is not I shall not believe you. But I don't think you will say so, because I believe you to be in truth a clever fellow in spite of your 'compliments' and your 'two and three o'clock on a Friday.'

"If you want to see my MS., say so with some earnestness, and it shall be conveyed to you. And please to say how much I shall be paid for it, for I am as poor as Job. And name a date. I won't be put off with your 'some time must elapse.' It shall see the light, or, at least, a part of it, within six months. That is my intention. And don't talk nonsense to me about clever novels not suiting magazines,—unless you mean that as an excuse for publishing so many stupid ones as you do.

"You will see that I am frank; but I really do mean what I say. I want it to come out in the 'Olympus,' and if we can I shall be so happy to come to terms with you.

"Yours as I find you,

"JOSEPHINE DE MONTMORENCI."

"Thursday.—King-Charles Street."

This was an epistle to startle an editor as coming from a young lady; but yet there was something in it that seemed to imply strength. Before answering it Mr. Brown did a thing which he must be presumed to have done as man and not as editor. He walked off to King-Charles Street in Camden Town, and looked at the house. It was a nice little street, very quiet, quite genteel, completely made up with what we vaguely call gentlemen's houses, with two windows to

each drawing-room, and with a balcony to some of them, the prettiest balcony in the street belonging to No. 19, near the Park, and equally removed from poverty and splendour. Brown walked down the street, on the opposite side, towards the Park, and looked up at the house. He intended to walk at once homewards, across the Park, to his own little home in St. John's Wood Road ; but when he had passed half a street away from the Puffle residence, he turned to have another look, and retraced his steps. As he passed the door it was opened, and there appeared upon the step,—one of the prettiest little women he had ever seen in his life. She was dressed for walking, with that jaunty, broad, open bonnet which women then wore, and seemed, as some women do seem, to be an amalgam of softness, prettiness, archness, fun, and tenderness,—and she carried a tiny blue parasol. She was fair, grey-eyed, dimpled, all alive, and dressed so nicely and yet simply, that Mr. Brown was carried away for the moment by a feeling that he would like to publish her novel, let it be what it might. And he heard her speak. "Charles," she said, "you shan't smoke." Our editor could, of course, only pass on, and had not an opportunity of even seeing Charles. At the corner of the street he turned round and saw them walking the other way. Josephine was leaning on Charles's arm. She had, however, distinctly avowed herself to be a young lady,—in other words, an unmarried woman. There was, no doubt, a mystery, and Mr. Brown felt it to be incumbent on him to fathom it. His next letter was as follows :—

" MY DEAR MISS DE MONTMORENCI,

" I am sorry that you should hate me and my compliments. I had intended to be as civil and as nice as possible. I am quite in earnest, and you had better send the MS. As to all the questions you ask, I cannot answer them to any purpose till I have read the story,—which I will promise to do without subjecting it to the pigeon-holes. If you do not like Friday, you shall come on Monday, or Tuesday, or Wednesday, or Thursday, or Saturday, or even on Sunday, if you wish it ;—and at any hour, only let it be fixed.

" Yours faithfully,

" JONATHAN BROWN."

" Friday."

In the course of the next week the novel came, with another short note, to which was attached no ordinary beginning or ending. "I send my treasure, and, remember, I will have it back in a week if you do not intend to keep it. I have not £5 left in the world, and I owe my milliner ever so much, and money at the stables where I get a horse. And I am determined to go to Dieppe in July. All must come out of my novel. So do be a good man. If you are I will see

you." Herein she declared plainly her own conviction that she had so far moved the editor by her correspondence,—for she knew nothing, of course, of that ramble of his through King-Charles Street,—as to have raised in his bosom a desire to see her. Indeed, she made no secret of such conviction. "Do as I wish," she said plainly, "and I will gratify you by a personal interview." But the interview was not to be granted till the novel had been accepted and the terms fixed,—such terms, too, as it would be very improbable that any editor could accord.

"Not so Black as he's Painted;"—that was the name of the novel which it now became the duty of Mr. Brown to read. When he got it home, he found that the writing was much worse than that of the letters. It was small, and crowded, and carried through without those technical demarcations which are so comfortable to printers, and so essential to readers. The erasures were numerous, and bits of the story were written, as it were, here and there. It was a manuscript to which Mr. Brown would not have given a second glance, had there not been an adventure behind it. The very sending of such a manuscript to any editor would have been an impertinence, if it were sent by any but a pretty woman. Mr. Brown, however, toiled over it, and did read it,—read it, or at least enough of it to make him know what it was. The verdict which Mr. Z. had given was quite true. No one could have called the story stupid. No Mentor experienced in such matters would have ventured on such evidence to tell the aspirant that she had mistaken her walk in life, and had better set at home and darn her stockings. Out of those heaps of ambitious manuscripts which are daily subjected to professional readers such verdict may safely be given in regard to four fifths,—either that the aspirant should darn her stockings, or that he should prune his fruit trees. It is equally so with the works of one sex as with those of the other. The necessity of saying so is very painful, and the actual stocking, or the fruit tree itself, is not often named. The cowardly professional reader indeed, unable to endure those thorns in the flesh of which poor Thackeray spoke so feelingly, when hard-pressed for definite answers, generally lies. He has been asked to be candid, but he cannot bring himself to undertake a duty so onerous, so odious, and one as to which he sees so little reason that he personally should perform it. But in regard to these aspirations,—to which have been given so much labours, which have produced so many hopes, offsprings which are so dear to the poor parents,—the decision at least is easy. And there are others in regard to which a hopeful reader finds no difficulty,—as to which he feels assured that he is about to produce to the world the fruit of some new-found genius. But there are doubtful cases which worry the poor judge till he knows not how to trust his own judgment. At this page he says, "Yes, certainly;" at the next he shakes his

head as he sits alone amidst his papers. Then he is dead against the aspirant. Again there is improvement, and he asks himself,—where is he to find anything that is better. As our editor read Josephine's novel,—he had learned to call her Josephine in that silent speech in which most of us indulge, and which is so necessary to an editor,—he was divided between Yes and No throughout the whole story. Once or twice he found himself wiping his eyes, and then it was all "yes" with him. Then he found the pages ran with a cruel heaviness, which seemed to demand decisive editorial severity. A whole novel, too, is so great a piece of business! There would be such difficulty were he to accept it! How much must he cut out! How many of his own hours must he devote to the repairing of mutilated sentences, and the remodelling of indistinct scenes. In regard to a small piece an editor, when moved that way, can afford to be good-natured. He can give to it the hour or so of his own work which it may require. And if after all it be nothing,—or, as will happen sometimes, much worse than nothing,—the evil is of short duration. In admitting such a thing he has done an injury,—but the injury is small. It passes in the crowd, and is forgotten. The best Homer that ever edited must sometimes nod. But a whole novel! A piece of work that would last him perhaps for twelve-months! No editor can afford to nod for so long a period.

But then this tale, this novel of "Not so Black as he's Painted," this story of a human devil, for whose crimes no doubt some Byronic apology was made with great elaboration by the sensational Josephine, was not exactly bad. Our editor had wept over it. Some tender-hearted Medora, who on behalf of her hyena-in-love, had gone through miseries enough to kill half a regiment of heroines, had dimmed the judges eyes with tears. What stronger proof of excellence can an editor have? But then there were those long pages of metaphysical twaddle, sure to elicit scorn and neglect from old and young. They, at any rate, must be cut out. But in the cutting of them out a very mincemeat would be made of the story. And yet Josephine de Montmorenci, with her impudent little letters, had already made herself so attractive! What was our editor to do?

He knew well the difficulty that would be before him should he once dare to accept, and then undertake to alter. She would be as a tigress to him,—as a tigress fighting for her young. That work of altering is so ungracious, so precarious, so incapable of success in its performance! The long-winded, far-fetched, high-stilted, unintelligible sentence which you elide with so much confidence in your judgment, has been the very apple of your author's eye. In it she has intended to convey to the world the fruits of her best meditation for the last twelvemonths. Thinking much over many things in her solitude, she has at last invented a truth, and there it lies. That wise men may adopt it, and candid women admire it, is the hope,

the solace, and at last almost the certainty of her existence. She repeats the words to herself, and finds that they will form a choice quotation to be used in coming books. It is for the sake of that one newly invented truth,—so she tells herself, though not quite truly,—that she desires publication. You come,—and with a dash of your pen you annihilate the precious gem! Is it in human nature that you should be forgiven? Mr. Brown had had his experiences, and understood all this well. Nevertheless he loved dearly to please a pretty woman.

And it must be acknowledged that the letters of Josephine were such as to make him sure that there might be an adventure if he chose to risk the pages of his magazine. The novel had taken him four long evenings to read, and at the end of the fourth he sat thinking of it for an hour. Fortune either favoured him or the reverse,—as the reader may choose to regard the question,—in this, that there was room for the story in his periodical if he chose to take it. He wanted a novel;—but then he did not want feminine metaphysics. He sat thinking of it, wondering in his mind how that little smiling, soft creature with the grey eyes, and the dimples, and the pretty walking dress, could have written those interminable pages as to the questionable criminality of crime; whether a card-sharper might not be a hero; whether a murderer might not sacrifice his all, even the secret of his murder, for the woman he loved; whether devil might not be saint, and saint devil. At the end of the hour he got up from his chair, stretched himself, with his hands in his trousers-pocket, and said aloud, though alone, that he'd be d—— if he would. It was an act of great self-denial, a triumph of principle over passion.

But though he had thus decided, he was not minded to throw over altogether either Josephine or her novel. He might still, perhaps, do something for her if he could find her amenable to reason. Thinking kindly of her, very anxious to know her personally, and still desirous of seeing the adventure to the end, he wrote the following note to her that evening:—

“ Cross Bank, St. John's Wood,
“ Saturday Night.

“ MY DEAR MISS DE MONTMORENCI,

“ I knew how it would be. I cannot give you an answer about your novel without seeing you. It so often happens that the answer can't be Yes or No. You said something very cruel about dear old X., but after all he was quite right in his verdict about the book. There is a great deal in it; but it evidently was not written to suit the pages of a magazine. Will you come to me, or shall I come to you;—or shall I send the MS. back, and so let there be an end of it? You must decide. If you direct that the latter course be taken, I will obey; but I shall do so with most sincere regret, both on account of your undoubted aptitude for literary work,

and because I am very anxious indeed to become acquainted with my fair correspondent. You see I can be as frank as you are yourself.

"Yours most faithfully,

"JONATHAN BROWN.

"My advice to you would be to give up the idea of publishing this tale in parts, and to make terms with X., Y., and Z.—in endeavouring to do which I shall be most happy to be of service to you."

This note he posted on the following day, and when he returned home on the next night from his club, he found three replies from the divine, but irritable and energetic, Josephine. We will give them according to their chronology.

No. 1. "Monday Morning.—Let me have my MS. back,—and, pray, without any delay.—J. DE M."

No. 2. "Monday, 2 o'clock.—How can you have been so ill-natured,—and after keeping it twelve days!"—His answer had been written within a week of the receipt of the parcel at his office, and he had acted with a rapidity which nothing but some tender passion would have instigated.—"What you say about being clever, and yet not fit for a magazine, is rubbish. I know it is rubbish. I do not wish to see you. Why should I see a man who will do nothing to oblige me? If X., Y., Z. choose to buy it, at once, they shall have it. But I mean to be paid for it, and I think you have behaved very ill to me.—JOSEPHINE."

No. 3. "Monday evening.—My dear Mr. Brown,—Can you wonder that I should have lost my temper and almost my head. I have written twice before to-day, and hardly know what I said. I cannot understand you editing people. You are just like women;—you will and you won't. I am so unhappy. I had allowed myself to feel almost certain that you would take it, and have told that cross man at the stables he should have his money. Of course I can't make you publish it;—but how you can put in such yards of stupid stuff, all about nothing on earth, and then send back a novel which you say yourself is very clever, is what I can't understand. I suppose it all goes by favour, and the people who write are your uncles, and aunts, and grandmothers, and lady-loves. I can't make you do it, and therefore I suppose I must take your advice about those old hugger-muggers in Paternoster Row. But there are ever so many things you must arrange. I must have the money at once. And I won't put up with just a few pounds. I have been at work upon that novel for more than two years, and I know that it is good. I hate to be grumbled at, and complained of, and spoken to as if a

publisher were doing me the greatest favour in the world when he is just going to pick my brains to make money of them. I did see old X., or old Z., or old Y., and the snuffy old fellow told me that if I worked hard I might do something some day. I have worked harder than ever he did,—sitting there and squeezing brains, and sucking the juice like an old ghoul. I suppose I had better see you, because of money and all that. I'll come, or else send some one, at about two on Wednesday. I can't put it off till Friday, and I must be home by three. You might as well go to X., Y., Z., in the meantime, and let me know what they say.—J.-DE M."

There was an unparalleled impudence in all this which affronted, amazed, and yet in part delighted our editor. Josephine evidently regarded him as her humble slave, who had already received such favours as entitled her to demand from him any service which she might require of him. "You might as well go to X., Y., Z., and let me know what they say!" And then that direct accusation against him,—that all went by favour with him! "I think you have behaved very ill to me!" Why,—had he not gone out of his way, very much out of his way indeed, to do her a service? Was he not taking on her behalf an immense trouble for which he looked for no remuneration,—unless remuneration should come in that adventure of which he had but a dim foreboding? All this was unparalleled impudence. But then impudence from pretty women is only sauciness; and such sauciness is attractive. None but a very pretty woman who openly trusted in her prettiness would dare to write such letters; and the girl whom he had seen on the door-step was very pretty. As to his going to X., Y., Z. before he had seen her, that was out of the question. That very respectable firm in the Row would certainly not give money for a novel without considerable caution, without much talking, and a regular understanding and bargain. As a matter of course they would take time to consider. X., Y., and Z. were not in a hurry to make a little money to pay a milliner or to satisfy a stable-keeper, and would have but little sympathy for such troubles;—all which it would be Mr. Brown's unpleasant duty to explain to Josephine de Montmorenci.

But though this would be unpleasant, still there might be pleasure. He could foresee that there would be a storm, with much pouting, some violent complaint, and perhaps a deluge of tears. But it would be for him to dry the tears and allay the storm. The young lady could do him no harm, and must at last be driven to admit that his kindness was disinterested. He waited, therefore, for the Wednesday, and was careful to be at the office of his magazine at two o'clock. In the ordinary way of his business the office would not have seen him on that day, but the matter had now been present in his mind so long, and had been so much considered,—had assumed

so large a proportion in his thoughts,—that he regarded not at all this extra trouble. With an air of indifference he told the lad who waited upon him as half-clerk and half-errand boy, that he expected a lady; and then he sat down, as though to compose himself to his work. But no work was done. Letters were not even opened. His mind was full of *Josephine de Montmorenci*. If all the truth is to be told, it must be acknowledged that he did not even wear the clothes that were common to him when he sat in his editorial chair. He had prepared himself somewhat, and a new pair of gloves was in his hat. It might be that circumstances would require him to accompany *Josephine* at least a part of the way back to Camden Town.

At half-past two the lady was announced,—*Miss de Montmorenci*; and our editor, with palpitating heart, rose to welcome the very figure, the very same pretty walking-dress, the same little blue parasol, which he had seen upon the steps of the house in King-Charles Street. He could swear to the figure, and to the very step, although he could not as yet see the veiled face. And this was a joy to him; for, though he had not allowed himself to doubt much, he had doubted a little whether that graceful houri might or might not be his *Josephine*. Now she was there, present to him in his own castle, at his mercy as it were, so that he might dry her tears and bid her hope, or tell her that there was no hope so that she might still weep on, just as he pleased. It was not one of those cases in which want of bread and utter poverty are to be discussed. A horsekeeper's bill and a visit to Dieppe were the melodramatic incidents of the tragedy, if tragedy it must be. Mr. Brown had in his time dealt with cases in which a starving mother or a dying father were the motives to which appeal was made. At worst there could be no more than a rose-water catastrophe; and it might be that triumph, and gratitude, and smiles would come. He rose from his chair, and, giving his hand gracefully to his visitor, led her to a seat.

"I am very glad to see you here, *Miss de Montmorenci*," he said. Then the veil was raised, and there was the pretty face half blushing, half smiling, wearing over all a mingled look of fun and fear.

"We are so much obliged to you, Mr. Brown, for all the trouble you have taken," she said.

"Don't mention it. It comes in the way of my business to take such trouble. The annoyance is in this, that I can so seldom do what is wanted."

"It is so good of you to do anything!"

"An editor is, of course, bound to think first of the periodical which he produces." This announcement Mr. Brown made, no doubt, with some little air of assumed personal dignity. The fact was one which no heaven-born editor ever forgets.

"Of course, sir. And no doubt there are hundreds who want to get their things taken."

"A good many there are, certainly."

"And everything can't be published," said the sagacious beauty.

"No, indeed; very much comes into our hands which cannot be published," replied the experienced editor. "But this novel of yours, perhaps, may be published."

"You think so?"

"Indeed I do. I cannot say what X., Y., and Z. may say to it. I'm afraid they will not do more than offer half profits."

"And that doesn't mean any money paid at once?" asked the lady plaintively.

"I'm afraid not."

"Ah! if that could be managed!"

"I haven't seen the publishers, and of course I can say nothing myself. You see I'm so busy myself with my uncles, and aunts, and grandmothers, and lady-loves——"

"Ah,—that was very naughty, Mr. Brown."

"And then, you know, I have so many yards of stupid stuff to arrange."

"Oh, Mr. Brown, you should forget all that."

"So I will. I could not resist the temptation of telling you of it again, because you are so much mistaken in your accusation. And now about your novel."

"It isn't mine, you know."

"Not yours?"

"Not my own, Mr. Brown."

"Then whose is it?" Mr. Brown, as he asked this question felt that he had a right to be offended. "Are you not Josephine de Montmorenci?"

"Me an author! Oh no, Mr. Brown," said the pretty little woman. And our editor almost thought that he could see a smile on her lips as she spoke.

"Then who are you?" asked Mr. Brown.

"I am her sister;—or rather her sister-in-law. My name is,—Mrs. Puffle." How could Mrs. Puffle be the sister-in-law of Miss de Montmorenci? Some such thought as this passed through the editor's mind, but it was not followed out to any conclusion. Relationships are complex things, and, as we all know, give rise to most intricate questions. In the half moment that was allowed to him Mr. Brown reflected that Mrs. Puffle might be the sister-in-law of a Miss de Montmorenci; or, at least, half sister-in-law. It was even possible that Mrs. Puffle, young as she looked, might have been previously married to a De Montmorenci. Of all that, however, he would not now stop to unravel the details, but endeavoured as he went on to take some comfort from the fact that Puffle was no doubt Charles. Josephine might perhaps have no Charles. And then it became evident to him that the little fair, smiling, dimpled thing before him

could hardly have written "Not so Black as he's Painted," with all its metaphysics. Josephine must be made of sterner stuff. And, after all, for an adventure, little dimples and a blue parasol are hardly appropriate. There should be more of stature than Mrs. Puffle possessed, with dark hair, and piercing eyes. The colour of the dress should be black, with perhaps yellow trimmings; and the hand should not be of pearly whiteness,—as Mrs. Puffle's no doubt was, though the well-fitting little glove gave no absolute information on this subject. For such an adventure the appropriate colour of the skin would be,—we will not say swallow exactly,—but running a little that way. The beauty should be just toned by sadness; and the blood, as it comes and goes, should show itself, not in blushes, but in the mellow, changing lines of the Brunette. All this Mr. Brown understood very well.

"Oh,—you are Mrs. Puffle," said Brown, after a short but perhaps insufficient pause. "You are Charles Puffle's wife?"

"Do you know Charles?" asked the lady, putting up both her little hands. "We don't want him to hear anything about this. You haven't told him?"

"I've told him nothing as yet," said Mr. Brown.

"Pray don't. It's a secret. Of course he'll know it some day. Oh, Mr. Brown, you won't betray us. How very odd that you should know Charles!"

"Does he smoke as much as ever, Mrs. Puffle?"

"How very odd that he never should have mentioned it. Is it at his office that you see him?"

"Well, no; not at his office. How is it that he manages to get away on an afternoon as he does?"

"It's very seldom,—only two or three times in a month,—when he really has a headache from sitting at his work. Dear me, how odd! I thought he told me everything, and he never mentioned your name."

"You needn't mention mine, Mrs. Puffle, and the secret shall be kept. But you haven't told me about the smoking. Is he as inveterate as ever?"

"Of course he smokes. They all smoke. I suppose then he used always to be doing it before he married. I don't think men ever tell the real truth about things, though girls always tell everything."

"And now about your sister's novel?" asked Mr. Brown, who felt that he had mystified the little woman sufficiently about her husband.

"Well, yes. She does want to get some money so badly! And it is clever;—isn't it. I don't think I ever read anything cleverer. Isn't it enough to take your breath away when Orlando defends himself before the lords?" This referred to a very high-flown passage which Mr. Brown had determined to cut out when he was thinking

of printing the story for the pages of the "Olympus." "And she will be so broken-hearted! I hope you are not angry with her because she wrote in that way."

"Not in the least. I liked her letters. She wrote what she really thought."

"That is so good of you! I told her that I was sure you were good-natured, because you answered so civilly. It was a kind of experiment of hers, you know."

"Oh,—an experiment!"

"It is so hard to get at people. Isn't it? If she'd just written, 'Dear sir, I send you a manuscript,'—you never would have looked at it;—would you?"

"We read everything, Mrs. Puffle."

"But the turn for all the things comes so slowly; doesn't it? So Polly thought——"

"Polly,—what did Polly think?"

"I mean Josephine. We call her Polly just as a nick-name. She was so anxious to get you to read it at once! And now what must we do?" Mr. Brown sat silent awhile, thinking. Why did they call Josephine de Montmorenci, Polly? But there was the fact of the MS., let the name of the author be what it might. On one thing he was determined. He would take no steps till he had himself seen the lady who wrote the novel. "You'll go to the gentlemen in Pater-noster Row immediately; won't you?" asked Mrs. Puffle, with a pretty little beseeching look which it was very hard to resist.

"I think I must ask to see the authoress first," said Mr. Brown.

"Won't I do?" asked Mrs. Puffle. "Josephine is so particular. I mean she dislikes so very much to talk about her own writings and her own works." Mr. Brown thought of the tenor of the letters which he had received, and found that he could not reconcile with it this character which was given to him of Miss de Montmorenci. "She has an idea," continued Mrs. Puffle, "that genius should not show itself publicly. Of course she does not say that herself. And she does not think herself to be a genius, though I think it. And she is a genius. There are things in 'Not so Black as he's Painted' which nobody but Polly could have written."

Nevertheless Mr. Brown was firm. He explained that he could not possibly treat with Messrs. X., Y., and Z.—if any treating should become possible,—without direct authority from the principal. He must have from Miss de Montmorenci's mouth what might be the arrangements to which she would accede. If this could not be done he must wash his hands of the affair. He did not doubt, he said, but that Miss de Montmorenci might do quite as well with the publishers by herself, as she could with any aid from him. Perhaps it would be better that she should see Mr. X. herself. But if he, Brown, was to be honoured by any delegated authority, he must

see the author. In saying this he implied that he had not the slightest desire to interfere further, and that he had no wish to press himself on the lady. Mrs. Puffle, with just a tear, and then a smile, and then a little coaxing twist of her lips, assured him that their only hope was in him. She would carry his message to Josephine, and he should have a further letter from that lady. "And you won't tell Charles that I have been here," said Mrs. Puffle as she took her leave.

"Certainly not. I won't say a word of it."

"It is so odd that you should have known him."

"Don't let him smoke too much, Mrs. Puffle."

"I don't intend. I've brought him down to one cigar and a pipe a day,—unless he smokes at the office."

"They all do that;—nearly the whole day."

"What; at the Post Office!"

"That's why I mention it. I don't think they're allowed at any of the other offices, but they do what they please there. I shall keep the MS. till I hear from Josephine herself." Then Mrs. Puffle took her leave with many thanks, and a grateful pressure from her pretty little hand.

Two days after this there came the promised letter from Josephine.

"DEAR MR. BROWN,

"I cannot understand why you should not go to X., Y., and Z. without seeing me. I hardly ever see anybody; but, of course, you must come if you will. I got my sister to go because she is so gentle and nice, that I thought she could persuade anybody to do anything. She says that you know Mr. Puffle quite well, which seems to be so very odd. He doesn't know that I ever write a word; and I didn't think he had an acquaintance in the world whom I don't know the name of. You're quite wrong about one thing. They never smoke at the Post Office, and they wouldn't be let to do it. If you choose to come, you must. I shall be at home any time on Friday morning,—that is, after half-past nine, when Charles goes away.

"Yours truly,

"J. DE M.

"We began to talk about Editors after dinner, just for fun; and Charles said that he didn't know that he had ever seen one. Of course we didn't say anything about the 'Olympus'; but I don't know why he should be so mysterious." Then there was a second postscript, written down in a corner of the sheet of paper. "I know you'll be sorry you came."

Our editor was now quite determined that he would see the adventure to an end. He had at first thought that Josephine was keeping herself in the background merely that she might enhance the favour of a personal meeting when that favour should be accorded. A pretty

woman believing herself to be a genius, and thinking that good things should ever be made scarce, might not improbably fall into such a foible. But now he was convinced that she would prefer to keep herself unseen if her doing so might be made compatible with her great object. Mr. Brown was not a man to intrude himself unnecessarily upon any woman unwilling to receive him; but in this case it was, so he thought, his duty to persevere. So he wrote a pretty little note to Miss Josephine saying that he would be with her at eleven o'clock on the day named.

Precisely at eleven o'clock he knocked at the door of the house in King-Charles Street, which was almost instantaneously opened for him by the fair hands of Mrs. Puffle herself. "H—sh," said Mrs. Puffle; "we don't want the servants to know anything about it." Mr. Brown, who cared nothing for the servants of the Puffle establishment, and who was becoming perhaps a little weary of the unravelled mystery of the affair, simply bowed and followed the lady into the parlour. "My sister is up-stairs," said Mrs. Puffle, "and we will go to her immediately." Then she paused, as though she were still struggling with some difficulty;—"I am so sorry to say that Polly is not well.—But she means to see you," Mrs. Puffle added, as she saw that the editor, over whom they had so far prevailed, made some sign as though he was about to retreat. "She never is very well," said Mrs. Puffle, "and her work does tell upon her so much. Do you know, Mr. Brown, I think the mind sometimes eats up the body; that is, when it is called upon for such great efforts." They were now upon the stairs, and Mr. Brown followed the little lady into her drawing-room.

There, almost hidden in the depths of a low arm-chair, sat a little wizened woman, not old indeed,—when Mr. Brown came to know her better, he found that she had as yet only counted five-and-twenty summers,—but with that look of mingled youth and age which is so painful to the beholder. Who has not seen it;—the face in which the eye and the brow are young and bright, but the mouth and the chin are old and haggard? See such a one when she sleeps,—when the brightness of the eye is hidden, and all the countenance is full of pain and decay, and then the difference will be known to you between youth with that health which is generally given to it, and youth accompanied by premature decrepitude. "This is my sister-in-law," said Mrs. Puffle, introducing the two correspondents to each other. The editor looked at the little woman who made some half attempt to rise, and thought that he could see in the brightness of the eye some symptoms of the sauciness which had appeared so very plainly in her letters. And there was a smile too about the mouth, though the lips were thin and the chin poor, which seemed to indicate that the owner of them did in some sort enjoy this unravelling of her riddle,—as though she were saying to herself, "What do you think

now of the beautiful young woman who has made you write so many letters, and read so long a manuscript, and come all the way at this hour of the morning to Camden Town!" Mr. Brown shook hands with her, and muttered something to the effect that he was sorry not to see her in better health.

"No," said Josephine de Montmorenci, "I am not very well. I never am. I told you that you had better put up with seeing my sister."

We say no more than the truth of Mr. Brown in declaring that he was now more ready than ever to do whatever might be in his power to forward the views of this young authoress. If he was interested before when he believed her to be beautiful, he was doubly interested for her now when he knew her to be a cripple;—for he had seen when she made that faint attempt to rise that her spine was twisted, and that, when she stood up, her head sank between her shoulders. "I am very glad to make your acquaintance," he said, seating himself near her. "I should never have been satisfied without doing so."

"It is so very good of you to come," said Mrs. Puffle.

"Of course it is good of him," said Josephine; "especially after the way we wrote to him. The truth is, Mr. Brown, we were at our wit's end to catch you."

This was an aspect of the affair which our editor certainly did not like. An attempt to deceive anybody else might have been pardonable; but deceit practised against himself was odious to him. Nevertheless, he did forgive it. The poor little creature before him had worked hard, and had done her best. To teach her to be less metaphysical in her writings, and more straightforward in her own practices should be his care. There is something to a man inexpressibly sweet in the power of protecting the weak; and no one had ever seemed to be weaker than Josephine. "Miss de Montmorenci," he said, "we will let bygones be bygones, and will say nothing about the letters. It is no doubt the fact that you did write the novel yourself?"

"Every word of it," said Mrs. Puffle energetically.

"Oh, yes; I wrote it," said Josephine.

"And you wish to have it published?"

"Indeed I do."

"And you wish to get money for it?"

"That is the truest of all," said Josephine.

"Oughtn't one to be paid when one has worked so very hard?" said Mrs. Puffle.

"Certainly one ought to be paid if it can be proved that one's work is worth buying," replied the sage Mentor of literature.

"But isn't it worth buying?" demanded Mrs. Puffle.

"I must say that I think that publishers do buy some that are worse," observed Josephine.

Mr. Brown with words of wisdom explained to them as well as he was able the real facts of the case. It might be that that manuscript, over which the poor invalid had laboured for so many painful hours, would prove to be an invaluable treasure of art, destined to give delight to thousands of readers, and to be, when printed, a source of large profit to publishers, booksellers, and author. Or, again, it might be that, with all its undoubted merits,—and that there were such merits Mr. Brown was eager in acknowledging,—the novel would fail in any way with the public.

"A publisher,"—so said Mr. Brown,—“will hardly venture to pay you a sum of money down, when the risk of failure is so great.”

“But Polly has written ever so many things before,” said Mrs. Puffle.

“That counts for nothing,” said Miss de Montmorenci. “They were short pieces, and appeared without a name.”

“Were you paid for them?” asked Mr. Brown.

“I have never been paid halfpenny for anything yet.”

“Isn’t that cruel,” said Mrs. Puffle, “to work, and work, and work, and never get the wages which ought to be paid for it?”

“Perhaps there may be a good time coming,” said our editor. “Let us see whether we can get Messrs. X., Y., and Z. to publish this at their own expénsé, and with your name attached to it. Then, Miss de Montmorenci——”

“I suppose we had better tell him all,” said Josephine.

“Oh, yes; tell everything. I am sure he won’t be angry; he is so good-natured,” said Mrs. Puffle.

Mr. Brown looked first at one, and then at the other, feeling himself to be rather uncomfortable. What was there that remained to be told? He was good-natured, but he did not like being told of that virtue. “The name you have heard is not my name,” said the lady who had written the novel.

“Oh, indeed! I have heard Mrs. Puffle call you,—Polly.”

“My name is,—Maryanne.”

“It is a very good name,” said Mr. Brown,—“so good that I cannot quite understand why you should go out of your way to assume another.”

“It is Maryanne—Puffle.”

“Oh;—Puffle!” said Mr. Brown.

“And a very good name, too,” said Mrs. Puffle.

“I haven’t a word to say against it,” said Mr. Brown. “I wish I could say quite as much as to that other name,—Josephine de Montmorenci.”

“But Maryanne Puffle would be quite unendurable on a title-page,” said the owner of the unfortunate appellation.

“I don’t see it,” said Mr. Brown doggedly.

"Ever so many have done the same," said Mrs. Puffle. "There's Boz."

"Calling yourself Boz isn't like calling yourself Josephine de Montmorenci," said the editor, who could forgive the loss of beauty, but not the assumed grandeur of the name.

"And Currer Bell, and Jacob Omnium, and Barry Cornwall," said poor Polly Puffle, pleading hard for her falsehood.

"And Michael Angelo Titmarsh! That was quite the same sort of thing," said Mrs. Puffle.

Our editor tried to explain to them that the sin of which he now complained did not consist in the intention,—foolish as that had been,—of putting such a name as Josephine de Montmorenci on the title-page, but in having corresponded with him,—with him who had been so willing to be a friend,—under a false name. "I really think you ought to have told me sooner," he said.

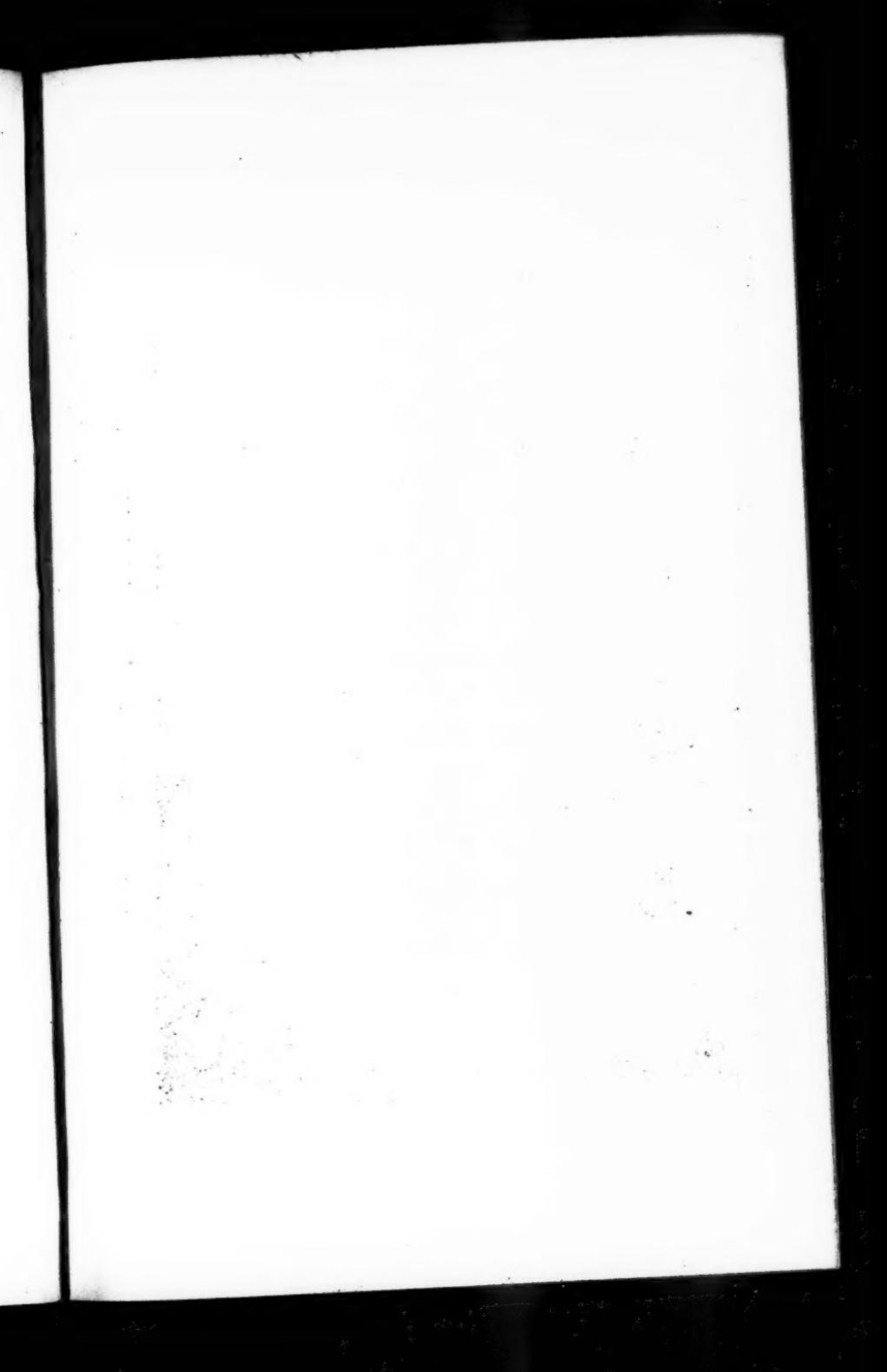
"If we had known you had been a friend of Charles's we would have told you at once," said the young wife.

"I never had the pleasure of speaking to Mr. Puffle in my life," said Mr. Brown. Mrs. Puffle opened her little mouth, and held up both her little hands. Polly Puffle stared at her sister-in-law. "And what is more," continued Mr. Brown, "I never said that I had had that pleasure."

"You didn't tell me that Charles smoked at the Post Office," exclaimed Mrs. Puffle,—"which he swears that he never does, and that he would be dismissed at once if he attempted it?" Mr. Brown was driven to a smile. "I declare I don't understand you, Mr. Brown."

"It was his little Roland for our little Oliver," said Miss Puffle.

Mr. Brown felt that his Roland had been very small, whereas the Oliver by which he had been taken in was not small at all. But he was forced to accept the bargain. What is a man against a woman in such a matter? What can he be against two women, both young, of whom one was pretty and the other an invalid? Of course he gave way, and of course he undertook the mission to X., Y., and Z. We have not ourselves read "Not so Black as he's Painted," but we can say that it came out in due course under the hands of those enterprising publishers, and that it made what many of the reviews called quite a success.



She was standing at her easel, drawing, with a little sketch before her.



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